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ABSTRACT

This publication was prepared as a sourcebook to assist Manitoba kindergarten through fourth grade teachers in providing young children with a rich and stimulating environment which promotes the children's growth and learning. The document provides information about the characteristics and needs of children throughout the period of early childhood, outlines the nature of the learning process during this period, and includes suggestions for programs and materials to meet the needs of young children during their various stages of development. Also included in the document are guidelines for organizing the activities and curriculum of the kindergarten classroom; check lists for observing and evaluating the kindergarten child in the classroom; suggestions for teachers who work with handicapped preschool and kindergarten children; and ways teachers can help parents understand the child's cognitive, physical, and language development. (Author/MP)

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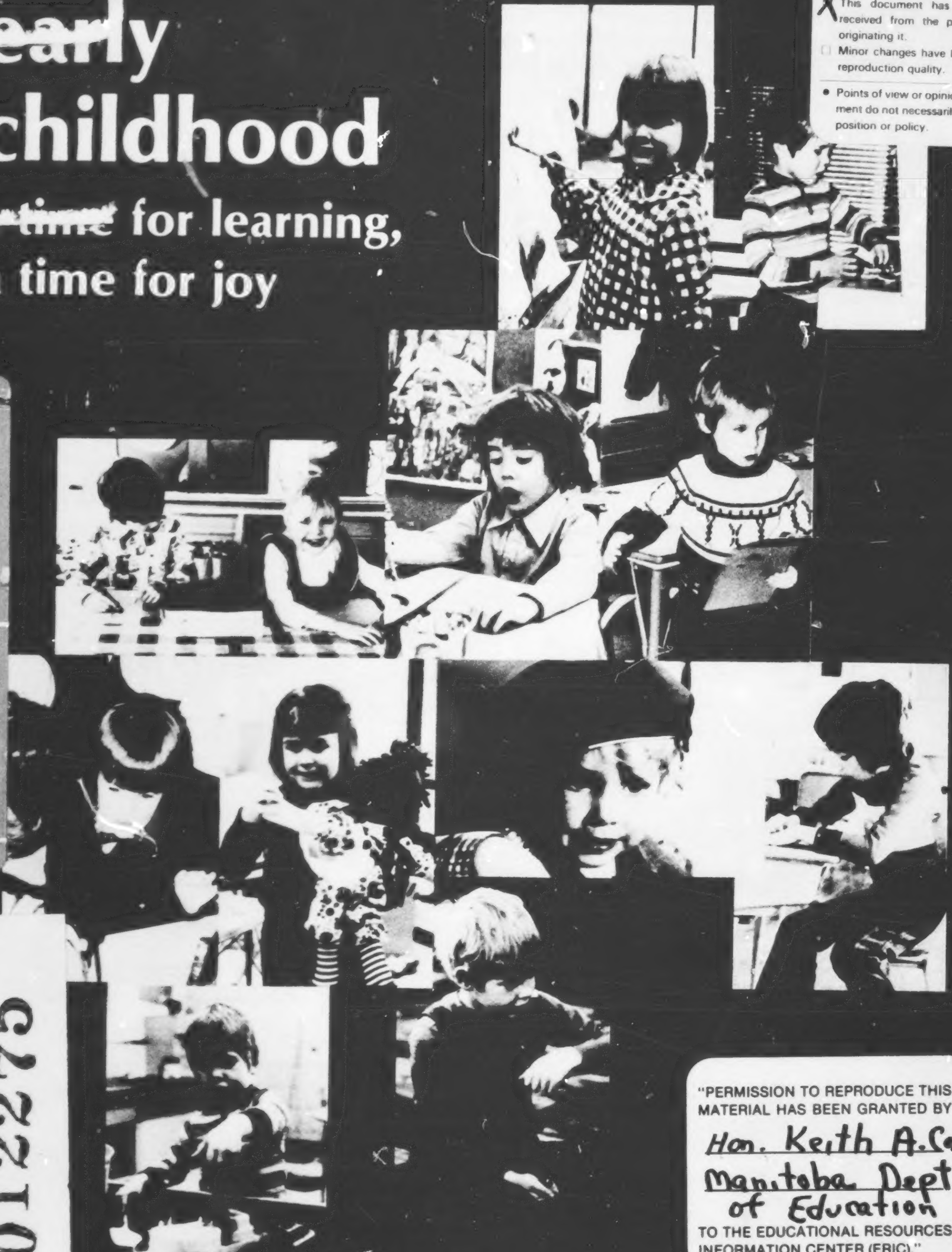

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Early Childhood:
A Time for Learning, a Time for Joy

compiled and written by Betty Gibson, M.Ed., LL.D. (Brandon)

Province of Manitoba
Department of Education 1979

International Year of the Child

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS vii

INTRODUCTION ix

CHAPTER ONE: CONTEMPORARY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION 1
I. Overview of Shifting Policies and Practices in Preschool Education 1
II. Growth of Intelligence in the Early Years 2
III. Cultural and Social Change: The Need for a Positive Environment 2
IV. The Young Child's Need for Physical Activity 3
V. School and Community Response to the Needs of the Child 4
Bibliography 5

CHAPTER TWO: THE NATURE OF THE CHILD 7
I. General Characteristics of the Three-to-Nine Year Old Child 7
    Maturation and Environment 7
II. Stages of Maturational Development 8
    Stage A: The Three- and Four-Year Old and the Immature Five-Year Old 8
    Stage B: The Maturing Five-Year Old and the Immature Six-Year Old 9
    Stage C: The Mature Six-Year Old and the Immature Seven-Year Old 11
    Stage D: The Seven-, Eight-, and Nine-Year Old 12
Bibliography 13

CHAPTER THREE: THE NATURE OF THE LEARNING PROCESS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD 14
I. Fostering Intellectual Growth 14
II. Nurturing Affective and Social Growth 16
    Stimulating Affective Growth 17
    Early Reading: There is No Rush! 18
    Preliminaries to Reading 18
Bibliography 19

CHAPTER FOUR: ORGANIZING THE KINDERGARTEN 20
I. Who Comes to Kindergarten 20
    Overview 20
    Kindergarten Entrance 21
II. The Kindergarten Classroom 23
    Kindergarten Children Require Ample Space 23
    Kindergarten Furnishings 23
    The Custodian and the Kindergarten Room 24
III. Kindergarten Models 25
    Shared Centre Space 25
    Kindergarten and Primary One Combined 26
    Two Kindergartens Combined 27
    Low-Enrollment Kindergarten and Low-Enrollment Primary One Combined 27
    Transition Class 28
IV. Desired Outcomes of a Kindergarten Program 28
    General Outcomes 29
    Interpersonal Outcomes 29
    Intrapersonal Outcomes 29
    Cognitive Outcomes 30

V. Nurturing Growth and Development 31
    Social Skills 31
    Meeting the Emerging Academic Needs 33
    Nurturing Curiosity and Creativity 35
    Meeting the Physical Needs 36
VI. Suggestions for Orientation to Kindergarten 39
    Pre-Registration: Last Week in April 39
    Setting up Classes: Second Week in May 39
    Visits to the Current Year's Kindergarten 40
    Staggered Entrance in September 40
    Parent Evenings 42
Bibliography 43
    Related Resources 44
    Children's Resources: Canadian 46
    Children's Books: International 49

CHAPTER FIVE: CURRICULUM RESOURCES 54
I. Planning a Daily Timetable 54
    Sample Daily Timetables 55
II. Suggestions for Group Activities 58
    Language Growth 58
    Finger Plays and Singing Games 65
    Thinking Skills 72
    Social Studies Themes 73
    Science 74
    Health and Safety 77
    Art 78
III. Activity and Learning Centres 80
    Housekeeping Centre 81
    Manipulative and Perceptual Activity Centre 81
    Sandbox and Water Play 83
    Dress-Up Centre 84
    Library and Listening Centre 86
    Science and Social Studies Activity Centres 86
    Cooking Centre 90
    Art Centre 96
    Centres Designed to Develop Academic Preliminaries: Language-Activity and Learning Centre 102
    Mathematics Learning Centre 106
IV. Developing Themes or Units and Centres of Interest 109
    Making Popcorn: A One Day Centre of Interest 109
V. Field Trips 113
    Planning 113
    Suggestions for Field Trips 114
Bibliography 115
    General Reference 115
    Art 116
    Cooking 117
    Language Arts 118
    Music 118
    Physical Education 119
    Poetry 119
    Stories and Nursery Rhymes 120
    Bibliographies of Children's Books 121
    Records 122

CHAPTER SIX: OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION 125
I. Observation and Evaluation 125
    Observation and Evaluation Check List 126
    Improving Observational Skills 128
    Evaluating Readiness for Formal Reading Instruction 128
    Summary of Evaluation of the Kindergarten Child 132
    Communicating with Parents 133
Bibliography 135

CHAPTER SEVEN: HOW PARENTS CONTRIBUTE TO THE CREATION OF FAVORABLE LEARNING CONDITIONS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN 136
I. Parents as Teachers 136
II. Helping Parents Understand Language Development 136
    Preschool Language Development 136
III. How Children Learn 139
IV. Areas of Development to Emphasize 140
    Language Development 140
    Body Awareness and Movement 141
    Gross Motor Development 143
    Fine Motor Coordination 144
    Visual Discrimination Skills 147
    Auditory Skills 148
V. Social Interaction and Control of Emotions 149
Bibliography 151

CHAPTER EIGHT: HELPING TEACHERS ACCOMMODATE HANDICAPPED CHILDREN 154
I. General Statement of Philosophy 154
    Visually Impaired Children 154
    Hearing Impaired Children 155
    Slower Learning Children 156
    Educable and Trainable Children 156
    Emotionally Disturbed and Hyperactive Children 156
    Conclusion 158
Bibliography 159

CHAPTER NINE: ENTERING THE PRIMARY YEARS: MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT 161
I. Entering Primary One 161
II. Stage C Program Suggestions 161
    A. Language Arts 163
        Activities that Prepare Children for Reading 164
        Approaches to Initial Reading Teaching 179
    B. Mathematics 182
    C. Social Studies 183
    D. Science 184
    E. Fine Arts and Physical Education 185
III. Suggested Guidelines for Kindergarten-Grade One Transition 185
    Developing Body Awareness, Coordination, and Balance 186
    Determining Handedness and a Feeling for Direction 186
    Using Small Muscles and Developing Eye/Hand Coordination 187
    Developing Visual Acuity 188
    Developing Auditory Acuity 188

IV. Stage D Suggestions 189
    Range of Ability in Stage D 189
    Curriculum Guides 190
    Mathematics 190
    Language Arts 191
  Bibliography 194
    Language Arts 194
    Mathematics 195

APPENDICES AND GLOSSARY 197
    Appendix 1: Sample Forms and Models for Orientation 198
    Appendix 2: Sample Evaluation Form - An Edmonton Model 202
    Appendix 3: Reading Readiness Tests 205
    Appendix 4: The Art of Storytelling 208
    Appendix 5: Classroom Arrangements 213
    Glossary 215

A note about the use of SI (metric) and Imperial Measurements

SI (metric) measures are used throughout this publication except in the case of certain recipes in Chapter Five where conversion from imperial to metric measurements could lead to inaccuracies.

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Introduction

The idea for the development of *Early Childhood: A Time for Learning, A Time for Joy* grew initially out of the discussions of the Early Years Program Review Committee late in 1976 concerning the need to revise or replace the then current kindergarten guide published originally in 1968. The plan was further developed and refined during 1977 and culminated in a request that the Department of Education undertake the preparation of a publication that would serve as a major resource for the teachers of Manitoba's young children to assist them in providing a rich and stimulating environment for growth and learning.

The decision to ask Dr. Betty Gibson to undertake what was clearly a mammoth task came naturally in view of her acknowledged reputation as one of Manitoba's foremost educators and her long experience in preparing teachers of young children. Following Dr. Gibson's acceptance, a sub-committee of the Early Years Program Review Committee was formed to work with her in the preparation of the manuscript which was completed in preliminary draft form in the summer of 1978. Since that time, the material has gone through numerous reviews, several drafts, and countless changes to reach the form in which it is presented here.

Essentially a sourcebook, *Early Childhood: A Time for Learning, A Time for Joy* does not replace current Department of Education curriculum guidelines that now incorporate kindergarten (e.g., language art, mathematics, science, art, music, etc.), to which teachers will need to refer for detailed outlines of scope and sequence for the various components of the school curriculum. Rather, Betty Gibson has presented a judicious balance between the theory and practice of early childhood education and placed emphasis on describing methods of teaching and models of organization to guide teachers in helping all children advance and develop happily, free from the frustrations which come from pressure to achieve beyond their capabilities. To this end, the document provides information about the characteristics and needs of children throughout early childhood, outlines the nature of the learning process, and makes suggestions for programs and materials to meet the needs of young children at various stages of development.

It is anticipated that the sourcebook will prove of particular value to all Manitoba's kindergarten teachers because of its special emphasis on this stage of child development. At the same time, because it also deals with children in the wider age range of 5-9 years, it is hoped that teachers of the primary years generally, and others interested in the early childhood area, will find considerable value in the chapters that follow. While the sourcebook's publication date - 1979, the International Year of the Child - has a particular and timely significance, Manitoba teachers should find herein a source of inspiration and fund of knowledge and ideas that will serve them for many years to come.

Chapter One
Contemporary Early Childhood Education

I. Overview of Shifting Policies and Practices in Preschool Education

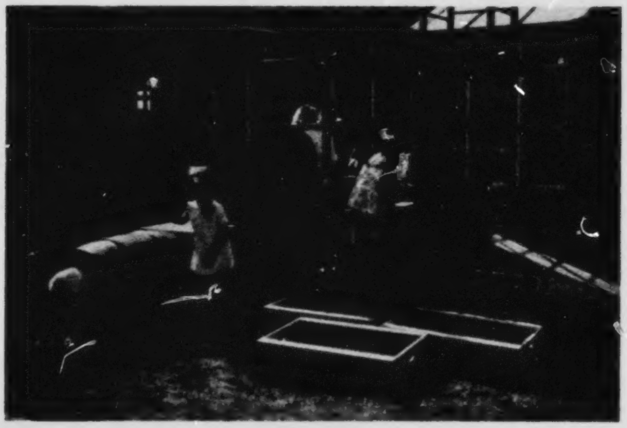
Over the past half century, the goals and methods of early childhood education have changed to reflect our evolving awareness of the physical, psychological, and social development which takes place during childhood. Different aspects of this process were emphasized at different times, consistent with the particular pedagogical and social values in vogue. In the Twenties, for example, play was considered to be the child's natural occupation, necessary for physical and psychological growth; nurseries and kindergartens, therefore, existed primarily for socialization. Children were left largely on their own with time, space, and materials for experimentation. The teacher encouraged self-motivation and self-help and provided suggestions for physical, mental, and sensory activities.

During the Thirties and Forties, new insights into personality development pointed up the importance to mental health of allowing children to express their emotions freely. While play still remained the most important activity for the child, it also became the vehicle through which this emotional growth could be stimulated. Teachers were cautioned to be on the alert for signs of distress, fear, or frustration and to help children deal with these feelings. The need for children to be dependently secure before they could be independently secure was recognized.

In the Fifties and Sixties, there was a changing emphasis as more became known about the development of intelligence. Teachers adjusted their programs to give added attention to language and conceptual growth. Emphasis on sensory and motor development was retained.

Today, the emphasis in early childhood programs is on direct and indirect teaching methods and on integrated activities which meet the needs of the individual children and help them to gain a sense of identity through satisfying interaction with peers. It is generally accepted that, until a child's confidence to explore and to focus effort has been developed, the sensitive teacher will need to plan activities to guide children to challenging but achievable goals within a flexible environment. The immature child can then comfortably attempt tasks that might otherwise cause stress. While encouraging skills in self-expression and simple decision-making, modern early childhood programs also recognize the need for children to develop the self-control and respect for others which are necessary to group living. Such programs are modelled on home environments which are both nurturing and stimulating.

Early childhood educational programs of the future should increasingly provide ongoing opportunities for children to make choices, to express themselves in words and actions, and to learn to trust and respect themselves and others. All this can be accomplished through a rich and active play life. There is no better foundation for a lifetime of learning.



Through play, children learn about the world around them.

II. Growth of Intelligence in the Early Years

While acknowledging that heredity may set widely varying limitations on children's potential for intellectual growth, writers in this field emphasize the extreme importance of the environment of the early years. Some researchers say that children develop 50% of their intelligence by age four and that a further 30% develops during the next ten years. A stimulating environment should give children opportunities to develop oral and aural language abilities; to think creatively; to organize their thoughts; to question freely, to develop auditory and visual perception and memory; to develop fine and gross motor skills; to enjoy art experiences using many and varied materials; to engage in singing and rhythm activities; to develop self-awareness; and to play happily with others.

In such an environment, children may show a beginning readiness for reading, writing, and dealing with the concepts of number and space during their fifth year or even earlier. At age six, most children are anxious to read and write. However, even at this age, all children are not yet ready for these activities. Children will begin to have a desire to read only if personal experiences with reading and written expression have been relevant and comfortable and have been enjoyable and satisfying.

III. Cultural and Social Change: The Need for a Positive Environment

Children entering school today bring with them many skills but much of the knowledge they possess may not be functional. Many children of our TV era have picked up words but not necessarily the concepts that match. This pseudosophistication sometimes makes them appear ready for higher level thought processes before they are able to handle them. To take another example, children appear to be able to handle modern household appliances but they may neither recognize the dangers inherent in handling such machines nor have the judgement to determine how and when they should be used. For these reasons, parents and teachers must remain observant, alert, and ready to provide the appropriate amount of guidance to young children throughout their development.

In an increasingly pluralistic society, the school experience will be shared by children whose cultures, life-styles, and economic backgrounds differ widely. Generally, children accept differences in race and color with a mild curiosity and without fear or resentment unless this has been learned from adults. They also accept the physically and mentally handicapped, provided that their behavior is non-threatening. However, molding a widely differing set of individuals into a happy group requires skill on the part of the adult and often a period of adjustment. All children need to be allowed to respect and retain features of their own culture so that they continue to feel comfortable with and accepting of their own family-life. At the same time, they may have to learn some of the social skills of the dominant culture so that others do not see the different behavior pattern as threatening. Teachers must accept the responsibility for recognizing features of differing cultures and for reflecting a respect for each child's home.

Intolerance is often prompted by fear and fear is usually the result of ignorance; ignorance can be dealt with in the school situation. When differences in clothing seem to set a new child apart, teachers can help by arranging for all the children to see and handle examples of clothes of other cultures. Little children wearing saris for the first time in a "dress-up" situation feel very elegant; the same thing happens when they don the kameez, the kimona, the shalwar or the turban. However, children do not as readily accept the food and eating habits of other cultures. Because it is often the spiciness of foods to which young children object, it is well therefore to avoid introducing different foods unless they are as bland as bannock or fortune cookies.

Cultural fairs and folkloramas provide opportunities for children to recognize that "being different" is not to be equated with "being inferior". Playing games that are part of the native child's heritage and learning to enjoy the folk dances and songs from other countries all encourage acceptance and understanding. Children in minority cultures need to be aware of contributing people and heroes in their own cultures. Whenever possible, therefore, the contributions made to Canada by the various cultures that make up this country should be pointed out, e.g., the Indian canoes, snowshoes, and guides played an important part in the European exploration of Canada; the most practical of modern winter clothes are modelled on Inuit clothing; Nordic fishermen and farmers opened up the Interlake areas; Asians worked to build the railway to the Pacific. Also, whenever possible, teachers should introduce people from a minority culture to interact with students; classroom visitors might include parents, sports and arts personalities, community helpers. Cross-cultural experiences can be enriching for all concerned; further examples are given in the Social Studies section of Chapter Five.

No child should have to endure the pain and indignity of being rejected because he or she is different. It is enough that immigrant children have to face linguistic problems! While the new child is absorbing the sound of the new language and picking up more from peers than can be taught formally, attention should be given to helping that child surmount the psychological and social problems which, if not solved can lead to chronic anxiety, feelings of inferiority, frustration, and bitterness and can interfere with learning. The teacher's attitude toward, and his or her sincere acceptance of minority groups in the classroom can ease the trauma of adjustment for those children who have been separated from the environments they knew and understood and have been placed in situations where much of what they experience does not make sense to them.

The school experience is shared by children whose cultures differ widely.

IV. The Young Child's Need for Physical Activity

Present-day lifestyles seem to deprive growing children of enough of the physical activity which is so essential to them. Children who live in apartments or congested areas of cities may have few safe and interesting places for outside play; urban environments often lack inside areas where really active play is possible. Many children travel to school by bus or car and spend long periods watching television; children come to school with pent-up energy waiting for release. Unless some positive opportunities for physical activity are offered, children may satisfy their need with restlessness, fighting, and destructive activities. For these reasons, early childhood classrooms, in particular, must provide space and equipment for both free and organized physical activity.

Vigorous activity should be a prominent feature at all levels of the early childhood school program.

V. School and Community Response to the Needs of the Child

1. Since free-play is one of the best agents for learning, much of the time of the child must be given to unstructured, self-organized play. Parents and schools must provide the materials, the time, the space, and the companions so that play is a natural part of every child's day.

2. The maturing child requires increasing amounts of guided cognitive learning. Play activities contribute to the child's expanding sensory perceptions which form the basis for cognitive growth.

3. Guiding a child in interpersonal relations is an important part of early childhood education. This guidance can be integrated into both organized and free-play activities. The schools should retain a strong affective emphasis.

4. Communities can provide support to parents in strengthening home-related features of the child's development. Parents may seek help in the areas of nutrition, prenatal and postnatal care, diagnosis of learning-related problems, sensory and verbal stimulation, language development, and formation of those good learning habits which contribute to growing independence.

5. Parents should be encouraged to become involved in early childhood programs so that they can reinforce those desirable habits and attitudes encouraged at school and help the teacher to understand what they consider important for their particular child. It has been noted that parents who receive help in parenting and who become involved in the school experience of their first child generally do a better job of preparing the next children for school.

6. Early childhood education should foster and build on the child's natural curiosity and provide opportunity for choices among a range of experiences appropriate to the learner's age. Adults can learn about the child by observing behavior.

The knowledge explosion has forced a re-assessment of what should be taught. One cannot predict what particular knowledge is going to be of future value to the child and no person can retain more than a small fraction of the data available. The emphasis in the schools, then, has to shift from retention of facts to development of the thinking processes. Competency in the thinking skills is a basis for the self-motivation needed for continued learning.

Where joy is a feature of early learning experiences, the child is likely to be motivated to continue to learn.

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These books are highly recommended for those who wish to read more about the studies and research which are influencing contemporary early childhood education.

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Chapter Two
The Nature of the Child

I. General Characteristics of the Three-to-Nine Year Old Child

This sourcebook is concerned mainly with children as they emerge from a state of total dependence on family and home and become involved with a much larger world which includes many children of their own age group. The new relationship to this extended peer group, as well as to adults outside the family sphere, will influence and possibly threaten the child's self-concept. The child needs to feel accepted in this new community while continuing to retain that sense of personal worth which should have been developed in an accepting home environment. Learning flourishes where the individual is respected; a confident sense of self is basic to the motivation to achieve! To gain that self confidence, the child needs adult support and reassurance about his or her ability to continue to learn and to achieve.

Maturation and Environment

For many years, growth was assumed to be an orderly unfolding of maturational stages; therefore, limited attention was given to the interaction between the child and the learning environment.

Piaget has pointed out, however, that such interaction is the most critical factor in determining the rate of intellectual growth and levels of achievement. The environment, therefore, must be especially rich and challenging as the child moves through the predominantly sensori-motor and pre-operational period of the preschool years. In the primary school years, the child needs to manipulate concrete materials while developing logical thinking processes. These thinking processes are necessary for the more symbolic thinking which the child will be expected to handle in early adolescence.

The child's own growth pattern, the quality of adult guidance and care received, and individual affective maturity will all influence the chronological age at which that child progresses from one learning stage to another.

Major Tasks of Maturational Stages

The following chart illustrates the major tasks to be accomplished during the maturational stages.

	Infant	2 yr	3	4-6	6-7	beyond
Body coordination and control	—	—	—	—	—	→
Language acquisition	—	—	—	—	—	→
Relating socially		—	—	—	—	→
Controlling and handling emotions				—	—	→
Learning to think				—	—	→
Developing a philosophy for living					—	→

II. Stages of Maturational Development

Stage A: The Three- and Four-Year Old and the Immature Five-Year Old

The Three-Year Old Child

This is a stage of equilibrium where children are eager to learn. At this stage, children usually feel good about themselves because they have learned the basics of language and can communicate, and because they can walk and are able to move independently of others. Succeeding in these two vital and rewarding achievements may have provided a sense of accomplishment which makes children more ready to conform and to try to please others.

The three-year old begins to develop a capacity to share, to take turns, and to wait for needs and desires to be satisfied. The child still, however, craves to be the centre of his or her little world; parents continue to be the focus of the child's life. This may be a period of amazing growth in language ability; imagination continues to develop. The child probably tells "stories" and invents imaginary playmates who are safe to be with as they can be ordered about, scolded, and blamed.

The child begins to move out of the period of parallel play into the period of cooperative play, but may often revert to playing beside, rather than with, others. This is a period when manners and rules can be taught, or rather "caught", from the people around.

At this stage, the child has a decided preference for large muscle movements and a real resistance to being expected to use fine muscles. This is a stage where mechanical toys, form-boards, and large puzzles can be enjoyed. It is an age of taking objects apart and resisting putting them together again. Three-year olds should not be asked to remain sedentary. They will play in the sandbox and on climbing apparati for fairly long periods. Tricycles, wagons and large balls are necessary to their kind of play.

The child perceives color but the understanding of shape and form is limited. Behavior problems at this stage usually occur when the three-year old is rejected by the less-conforming four and five-year olds.

Parents often worry about the approach-avoidance behavior which is characteristic of this age. Children seem ready and eager to take part in activities with others and then suddenly decide not to do so; they want certain toys and then quickly toss them aside. These children must be given time to try out relationships. They are also getting to know and appreciate their bodies; because they fear and resent the loss of any part of the body, they resist having their hair and toenails cut. They try out facial effects and like to observe them in mirrors, but they still resent playmates who make faces at them!

Tactile sensations are important at this age; children want to touch and handle everything they see, often with disastrous results. Highly valued objects and irreplaceable treasures should be placed out of reach while children are learning that touching is not always acceptable.

The Maturing Four-Year Old and the Immature Five-Year Old

This is a period of change and insecurity. The child is growing rapidly and may have lost the good motor coordination which is typical of most three-year olds. The child will regain this coordination, however, through activity.

The four-year old stage is also a period of emotional extremes. Gesell calls this the "out of bounds" stage. Friendship with peers is very important, but since four-year olds are boisterous and intolerant of changes in rules and habits, they are apt to get into fights and cry or whine because they cannot cope with themselves and others. It is the age of ruthlessness and other children's feelings and rights are given scant consideration. The child knows what is "mine" but is also apt to think that anything that can be grasped, is also "mine". Shocking adults is enjoyable and swearing is one certain way to accomplish this. Because the child is having real difficulty separating fact from fiction, he or she may also establish a reputation as a fabricator.

This is a period of marked language growth and a time when the child can deal successfully with a second language. The four-year old uses full sentences, has a sharp ear for sounds, can make up rhymes, and enjoys interesting and silly words. This is a time for learning nursery rhymes, jingles, and commercials which are all so useful in developing the auditory skills needed in reading.

The four-year old thrives on variety and demands changes of pace but also needs judicious firmness and control; isolation for short periods often helps the child to calm down. Parents may despair because the child forgets the politeness and social manners once displayed; moods shift easily, the child enjoys mischief, and can become a "show off".

It is a time of sibling rivalry and power struggles because this child demands leadership roles and feels a need for self-assertion. Though the child may still comply with adult demands, it is often done unwillingly and may be followed by acts of aggression often expressed against younger siblings. Though usually protective and loving toward younger children, the four-year old may often use them as scapegoats.

Stage 3: The Maturing Five-Year Old and the Immature Six-Year Old

This is the age at which most children enter kindergarten and is one of equilibrium corresponding to the equilibrium of age three. The five-year old is not so likely to be in conflict with self or with the environment; usually the child has solved many problems related to motor control, exhibits an economy of motor movement, and can attempt many more complicated tasks.

The child has more poise and muscular skill, but fine muscle coordination is often weak and the eyes may not yet be ready for prolonged close-up work or very fine visual discrimination. Children who spend long hours watching TV or who grow up in homes where free play is not possible, often show a developmental lag with respect to fine muscle coordination.

Socially the five-year old is usually self-sufficient enough to be able to reach out to peers. If unable to attend a kindergarten, the child's parents should seek out situations where he or she can play with children of a similar age. Parents are still the pivot of the world, but as long as they are there, the child will venture out into unfamiliar situations for short periods. The five-year old desires approval from adults and to a lesser extent from peers and is, on the whole, quite cooperative. Now, however, the child is able to assess personal chances of success in tasks and may resist attempting them if they seem too difficult.

The five-year old is becoming more obedient and is willing to accept the rules that are necessary for group living. For the most part, he or she is willing to observe conventions, be polite, and is willing to ask permission. The child also questions rules, however, and should be told why particular regulations add to the quality of life for all; children at this stage require explanations in order to comprehend as reasonable the consequences of their own anti-social behavior.

The five-year old is willing to accept the
rules that are necessary for group living.

The child is capable of a great deal intellectually and should receive much stimulation at this stage. The five-year old is very curious and enthusiastic about learning and begins to find security in routine, in finishing tasks, and in solving problems. Toward the end of this stage, the child begins to worry about not being acceptable to peers. Children at this age are also likely to develop anxieties about dying and about the death of loved ones.

This child is ready to do some learning in a formal setting but learns best in a free play situation where there is some choice of activity and the child can take on some responsibility for directing his or her own learning.

Some mature five-year olds may demonstrate a desire to learn to read and to write stories. This natural development should be recognized by those who are planning the child's activities. Others may express the desire to learn but may be developmentally not ready to be involved in early reading activities. Criteria for determining readiness are discussed in detail in Chapter Six of this sourcebook.

The five-year old uses language quite skillfully, being able to handle most grammatical constructions including longer and more complex sentences, clauses of condition, and idiomatic expressions. Guidance is needed for the child who uses language as a form of aggression. Name-calling can become a weapon of the physically weak.

Five-year olds are often concerned with cause and effect but frequently reach erroneous conclusions since relationships are confused in their immature thinking.

The task of the parent and the teacher is to be sensitive to the right moment for a particular learning. Skills are most likely to develop when physical and psychological growth has assured that they can be used. Instruction is most effective when it is begun at the stage of readiness.

Stage C: The Mature Six-Year Old and the Immature Seven-Year Old

The development that takes place in this period is probably the most significant in the child's school life. The child is now considered self-sufficient enough to move into a peer world. He or she still wants assurance that parents are available when needed, but becomes increasingly anxious to be accepted by friends.

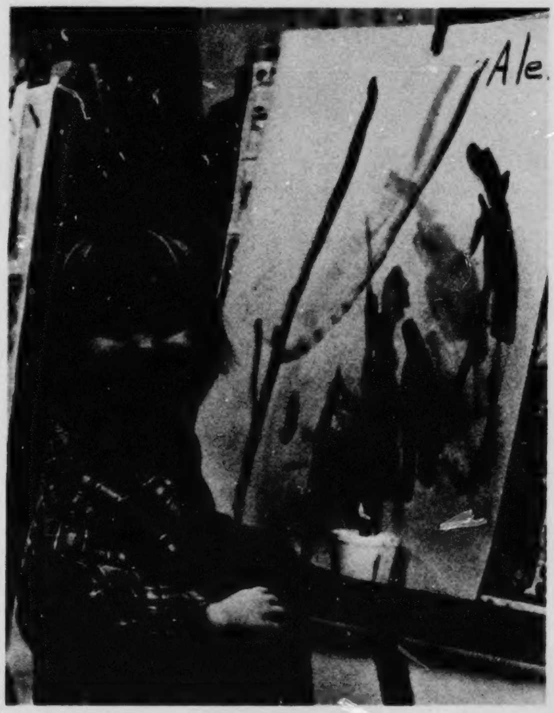
Physical growth usually progresses at an even pace; the child can accommodate these changes and can develop a high degree of coordination.

Personality traits are fairly well established and there will probably not be any dramatic changes until the onset of adolescence. The child is now seen by others as a unique individual rather than as a "child going through a particular stage."

Memory improves dramatically at this age and auditory discrimination reaches a peak; a good time to develop listening skills! Thought processes become much more organized. Expressions of feeling may not be so overt; the child is aware that some thoughts and actions are best hidden from adults and so develops patterns of behavior for the playground, for the home, and for the classroom.

The beginning of regular school attendance should not mark such a radical departure from the kindergarten or home environment that the child builds up a poor self-image and loses confidence. It is essential that the child's coordination skills, motor abilities, and independence in self-care be recognized and appreciated by both the parents and the teacher. (The teacher is often seen as a surrogate parent or a first "sweetheart".) Expecting the child to read and write too soon, coupled with evaluation based only on intellectual skills, may elicit feelings of guilt and inadequacy. Self-motivation for school tasks may be lost.

For all children, drama, art, movement, physical activities, and play are vital parts of their lives. The joy and satisfaction found in these areas help to develop a fulfilled child.



I am six. I am happy when I know that:
I am a person; You want me and love me;
I am O.K. even when I make mistakes; I
am respected and treated as important;
You appreciate me as I am; I can trust you!

Six- or seven-year olds engage in power struggles. They need recognition from teachers and approval by peers. If they fail to get this recognition and approval using socially acceptable behavior, they will likely try unacceptable behavior, often using cruel words to hurt others. All children find rejection in front of peers difficult to accept. This is an age when children indulge in tattling. Telling on someone just to make trouble ought to be discouraged, but at times, children feel it is necessary to seek the help of an adult if the ends of justice are to be served. Teachers and parents need to be aware that at this age some competition will occur, but competition should not be encouraged.

Stage D: The Seven-, Eight-, and Nine-Year Old

This is a period of rapid skill development and increased motor coordination. Good self-concept is more apt to develop in response to prowess in games and physical activities since children may already have proven that they can learn the tools of reading, writing, and calculating. This is a period when parents are apt to over-organize their children's free time by registering them for all sorts of activities. When this occurs, much creative potential is stifled.

Anything that is done to stimulate growth must be carried out in a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere.

Children are now approaching the stage described by Piaget as the "concrete operations stage" and are vitally interested in classifying and becoming collectors of things such as shells, hockey cards, match covers, etc. The ability to think logically is developing, but they will argue illogically at times, if only to test their evolving skills.

Eight to nine-year olds want to assure themselves of a close circle of friends and expect to have a "best friend". If they cannot make and keep friends, they will probably feel inadequate and may seek recognition in socially unacceptable activities to get the attention of both adults and peers. Swaggering and flippancy are tolerated by friends of this age. Toward the end of this period, admitting a liking for school may become as unacceptable as is any admission that one can tolerate the opposite sex.

This is an age for asserting an independence from adults. However, as the child sheds the security of adult control, he or she has doubts and anxieties and may mask them by aggressiveness and bravado. At this point the child seeks new models to replace those that are rejected. A slightly older brother or sister, cousin or friend, often serves as a new model.

Adults must expect that the tender feelings of the child whose models are shifting might be reflected in bursts of temper and tantrums, periods of regression and conflict.

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Chapter Three
The Nature of the Learning Process in Early Childhood

I. Fostering Intellectual Growth

Learning is an active process beginning at birth and developing as the child matures and responds to the environment. Reasoning, abstracting, interpreting, and integrating are highly sophisticated intellectual processes. Learning begins with sensations, which, when they reach the central nervous system, become interpreted and gain meanings. The child's ability to react to and interpret sensations provides clues to his or her perceptual ability. Sensations are perceived as being alike in some respects and different in others; when likenesses can be recognized in things otherwise different ("four-leggedness" of many animals) and differences can be recognized in things otherwise the same (cows are not exactly the same as horses) the child is able to form concepts. Concepts are, at first, vague, frequently incorrectly formed, and require the organizing and reorganizing which goes on all through life if they are to become sharpened and integrated.

Piaget calls the processes by which concepts are changed, assimilation and accommodation. The child fits knowledge into a cognitive structure which is already formed (assimilation) and changes a structure to make it possible to include the new knowledge (accommodation). These processes are the bases for learning throughout life. Until perceptual ability is well-developed, the child cannot internalize new elements in the environment; until the brain is able to organize and reorganize the messages it receives, the child cannot make use of the perceptions which the sense organs may provide.

Growth in perception and the organization of cognitive structures depend on developmental processes; the early years should, therefore, be a time of rapid growth in the formation of both percepts and concepts since future learning will be built on the structure developed in the first seven years. Piaget classifies the learning stages as:

Sensory motor: birth to 1-1/2 years,
Pre-conceptual: 1-1/2 to 4-1/2 years,
Intuitive: 4-1/2 to 7 years.

In the intuitive stage, which corresponds to the early years of schooling, learning takes place most successfully when the child is involved in exchanges, discussions, agreements and oppositions in social intercourse between children or between children and adults; and when the child is actively involved in the manipulation of concrete materials. Piaget is certain that this type of learning is far more important to cognitive development than is the learning which comes only through language, although language learning and concrete learning can be mutually supportive.

The kinesthetic-proprioceptive[1] senses must function fully if the child is to be aware of his or her musculo-skeletal position in space. This sensitivity is necessary to the development of muscular coordination and all automatic activities such as walking, touch-typing and operating machines. The degree to which the senses function at this stage is basic to the child's learning. In the intuitive stage, the child should have many experiences especially in play situations which require the use of the five senses and needs stimulation from many sources while learning to organize and utilize information. Multi-sensory teaching is based on the recognition of this need.

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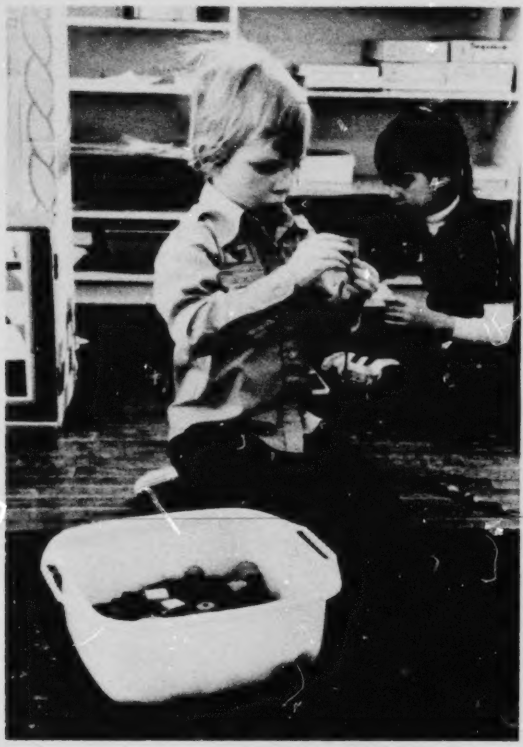
[1] The proprioceptive stimuli are those generated by the position and movements of the parts of the body with respect to other parts.



Real life experiences rooted in sensory-motor experiences are basic to all later, more complex forms of learning.

Learning for children between the ages of 3 and 9 must, therefore, include activities designed to teach the child to organize perceptions. Such activities might include:

- the use of language and the development of vocabulary needed for classifying;
- classification/categorization activities;
- games that require recognition of differences;
- association games;
- perceptual-motor activities;
- role playing (the child learns to adapt language to varying situations);
- physical activities, particularly those that develop kinesthetic-proprioceptive sense, e.g., position in space, directionality;
- balance, eye-hand coordination; and
- activities that require patterning and sequencing.

Practical examples of these activities are given in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven.

In addition, the learning environment must provide children with:

- opportunity for self-selection of activities;
- materials for self-initiated activities;
- a variety of experiences both within and outside the classroom;
- opportunities to enhance feelings of self-worth.

Interpreting a story.

II. Nurturing Affective and Social Growth

The early years are also critical ones for affective growth. Children's social competence and emotional patterns develop and stabilize early in life; at this age, the child is learning how to deal with emotions, how to react to others, and how to cope with the needs and demands of family and playmates. Along with developing social capacities comes a growing awareness of the body and of his or her own personality. The child must have the help and guidance of good models in order to develop a positive self regard, to become aware of the accepted rules of social behavior, and to become genuinely interested in other people and respectful of their rights. Children learn by observation, by trial and error and by assessing the reaction of others to their behavior. Personality can be modified most easily before a child reaches middle childhood. In the early years the child can learn to be reflective rather than impulsive. If helped to feel adequate, the child will probably be happy, will persevere, meet challenges as they come, and have an outlook that says, "I think I can deal with most unpleasant situations." If the child feels inadequate and unaccepted, he or she may react to difficulties by completely withdrawing or gaining attention by some form of negative behavior.

During this period, the child should:

- learn to cope with disappointments;
- develop realistic expectations for self and others;
- accept personal limitations;
- learn to evaluate self and others realistically;
- learn to respect differences among people;
- learn how to play with and relate to others;
- learn to share time, materials, and the affection of others.

Stimulating Affective Growth

. Situations that the child is not yet able to handle should be avoided. Exposure to threatening or emotionally charged situations should be kept to a minimum while the child is learning to control his or her own emotions and behavior. An adult can reduce stress in a social situation by removing a toy that triggers rivalry and reintroducing it when a rule for its use has been established.

. Growth will only take place when there is a reasonable match between what the child encounters and what can be coped with emotionally. A child in a tantrum may learn nothing except how to become the centre of interest and, if not wisely handled, may learn an undesirable method of getting his or her own way.

. Balance the adult support and the child's freedom to choose. If there are no boundaries to behavior, the child experiences stress and confusion; if unrealistic demands are made of that child, anxiety results. Assurance and sensitively handled control lead to independence as long as the child has some opportunity to experiment and make choices within the framework provided. However, children often try to redefine limits by overstepping them; this is a legitimate learning process.

. It is not realistic to expect adult standards of morality from the young child whose ideas of right and wrong are not integrated and may often be contradictory. The child will model his or her behavior in terms of what the people important to that child, approve and reward. It the teacher and parents have diametrically opposed value systems, the child may be forced to develop two behaviors, one for home and one for school.

. Be prepared to discuss the child's problem but be aware that detailed adult explanations can be wasted on the very young. As the child approaches the middle years and begins to build a personal value system, an internally integrated morality develops. At this point, discussions and explanations can be a great help to the child who is struggling to clarify values. Help the child in examining possible choices and in considering consequences. Role playing is one effective technique by which this can be done.

. Basic needs must be met in a consistent, satisfying manner; poorly fed, exhausted, apprehensive children cannot trust others. Physical needs often take precedence over social and emotional needs.

. Avoid all harsh emotional punishment. If punishment is inconsistent and highly emotional, the child becomes anxious and loses his self-esteem. Under these conditions of low trust, a child will risk or initiate very little. Children cannot cope effectively with adults who make random and unpredictable demands on them.

. Adult behavior must be consistent with the values being espoused. The teacher and parents must demonstrate consideration for others, acceptance of individual differences, fairness, and concern before they can expect children to act in a similar manner. Be genuinely warm, accepting, and consistent toward children. Listen to their questions and protests. Help them to visualize what it is like "to walk in the other person's shoes." Role playing contributes to understanding the other person's point of view.

. Language is the vehicle of social interaction and language development is essential to emotional growth. Children need the vocabulary necessary to express their concerns and to make sense of their experiences; those who cannot express themselves verbally, physically act out their needs and frustrations.

Early Reading: There is No Rush!

Pressure to provide systematic reading instruction at an early age seems to be growing. However, many excellent teachers and a number of researchers involved in the study of reading express reservations about the wisdom of providing any form of systematic instruction in reading in the nursery and kindergarten. Certainly it is possible to teach some four or five year olds to read; the question remains, however, whether this is the most valuable use of a child's time. It is possible that real harm could result if formal reading instruction is begun earlier than in the first of the primary years.

Most educators of young children agree that no child should be put under any pressure to learn to read. Children who are not developmentally ready for reading, whether age 4 or 7, cannot succeed at the task and an unhappy beginning would have an inhibiting effect on later attempts to learn. However, some children reach the "right" moment to begin learning to read at five years of age or earlier. Should this moment be disregarded because "teaching reading is not considered to be a kindergarten task?" Certainly no "teachable moment" should deliberately be passed by.

The teacher should consider the kindergarten program as a prereading program with emphasis on oral language development. If prereading is handled without pressure and taught through games, language experience charts, and self-chosen activities, the readiness will increase and many children will begin to read on their own.

At no time should the reading child be directed away from an interest in reading. If the child is learning in response to a program which is truly a readiness program, the teacher can be certain that the child is physiologically and psychologically ready and that no harm is being done. The understanding teacher will provide the materials, the quiet corner, the opportunity to read to others and will let the child feel good about his or her accomplishment. At the same time, the fact that some children in a class are reading should be kept in perspective, and the non-reading children must not be made to feel inadequate or guilty. They must want to read for the pleasure of reading. All kindergartens should make provision for the small group of children who will begin to learn to read at an early age, but no kindergarten should be judged by the number of readers produced there.

The kindergarten teacher should provide a program that will make it possible for all slower-maturing children to become as ready for reading as their physiological and intellectual maturation will allow. Any concern with reading should be focused on the prereading skills. The child who learns these skills early, will read in what is usually the best way; a combination of sight, context, phonetic, and structural clues to unlock the secrets of the printed word. Young children who want to read and are ready to do so, should be given help when they request it. This procedure is safe and quite different from the procedure of introducing all kindergarten children to formal reading.

Preliminaries to Reading

The teacher needs to be fully aware of the skills and concepts that the child should acquire prior to formal instruction; opportunities for skill building can be provided through exposure to games and activities which interest the child and suit the particular stage of development.

Socialization, language and cognitive development are the main components of early childhood and primary programs. Language development continues throughout life but the foundations are laid in the early childhood years. Language, an important life skill, is also the most important element in readiness for reading. Prereading skills that have a legitimate place in a preschool program include the ability to:

- see likenesses and differences in objects, pictures and symbols;
- match puzzle pieces. At first these puzzles must be simple and require limited experimentation. As skills develop, more complex puzzles should be provided, but the child who wants the security of repeated success with easy puzzles should be allowed to remain at this plateau;
- work with form boards, progressing gradually from the simple to the more complex;
- copy patterns, using materials such as blocks, beads, attribute blocks. Children who are able to reproduce forms can be expected to copy, extend, and even to complete patterns using concrete materials;
- sort and find objects that do not belong in a grouping because they differ in color, size, or shape;
- hear like sounds and rhyme;
- arrange sequentially, order, and classify;
- handle the language of instruction well;
- recognize the link between oral and written language.

To want to learn is far more important than being taught. Worthwhile learning takes place only when the student is comfortable enough to process and integrate the information to which he or she is being exposed.

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Chapter Four
Organizing the Kindergarten

I. Who Comes to Kindergarten

Overview

Kindergarten is not designed to be a preparation for Primary One. It should be a year of learning and a time of joy for preschoolers. Preparation for Primary One is a happy by-product of a successful year of living and learning in the Kindergarten.

Kindergarten is a place where five and six year old children are provided with a stimulating environment that allows them to interact with peers and concerned adults in a program designed to encourage physical, social, mental, and emotional growth appropriate to their age and stage of development. The program is informal and uses the play activities natural to this stage to encourage the development of muscular coordination and communication skills as well as cognitive and social competencies. It is normally of one year duration, but where children have not reached the stage of maturity generally considered necessary for the Primary One program, the Kindergarten experience should [illegible] extended.

At the time they enter kindergarten, most children will be in the age group of 56-69 months. Many of these children will, both developmentally and behaviorally, have reached Stage B; others will be in Stage A (See Chapter Two for an explanation of the terms). Ten months later, when the children have completed kindergarten, most will have reached Stage B in their development, but it is widely acknowledged that the younger children and those who mature slowly will still be in Stage A.

The program suggestions outlined in Chapter Five, make provision for Stage A children to move into Stage B activities as they mature, but anticipate that, for the greater part of the year, some children will require an environment that resembles a stimulating home environment. Teachers should plan to allow Stage A children, at least in the early part of the year, to spend much of their time in "activity centres" until they are ready for the "learning centres". This is not to suggest that learning does not go on in activity centres: much learning takes place, but it is the kind that prepares the children for the higher mental processes. The learning centres are designed to develop academic awareness and to teach those academic concepts and skills which Stage B children can handle. However, "paper and pencil learning" is neither suitable nor endorsed for any kindergarten centres. Stage B children should be introduced to the more structured learning centres only when they demonstrate readiness for a particular activity; these children should continue to use the less structured activity as well. Forcing growth usually causes severe setbacks when the conditions used for forcing are no longer present. If children are placed in a rich environment where they are happy and have the opportunity to engage in a variety of well-chosen activities, growth should be natural, comfortable and in keeping with their own developmental patterns.

In addition to the development which takes place in centres, all children should have opportunities to grow and learn in large-group and small-group sessions.

There should be no labelling of children as belonging to group A or group B. It is to be expected that many children will fall into group A with respect to some abilities and characteristics and into group B with respect to others.

A rich and happy environment promotes comfortable growth.

Kindergarten Entrance

Frequently parents are unsure about the wisdom of enrolling children who just barely meet the minimum age requirements for entering kindergarten. The following information may be helpful to both parents and teachers:

- In Manitoba, compulsory school age is seven years. Enrollment of a child in kindergarten is, then, entirely at the discretion of the parents concerned, and provision of kindergarten facilities in any school division is at the discretion of the school division board.

  However, most divisions provide kindergartens when the number of children wishing to enroll warrants the establishment of a class; therefore, most children in Manitoba have the opportunity to attend. The minimum age at which children are accepted for kindergarten enrollment is usually set at one full year less than the age at which children are accepted in Primary One. In most divisions children enrolling in kindergarten must be five years of age by November 30 or December 31, depending which date is used as the cut-off date for school entrance. Consequently some children are as young as four years and eight months when they come into kindergarten and others will be almost a year older, necessitating that the teacher plan the program with activities to encompass this age spread. However, it is not to be expected that all children who are still four years of age when they enter kindergarten will be mature enough to begin Primary One a year later.

- Chronological age alone is not a satisfactory measure of maturity. Some four year old children may be mature enough to benefit from the program while some five year old children may not. In making decisions about kindergarten entrance, parents should consider the child's verbal ability and his or her social, physical, and intellectual maturity. The learning needs of some four and five year old children are better met in a nurturing home environment.

- Some children who are very young when they come to kindergarten and who move to Primary One the following year, may have to struggle to learn to read and may lose confidence in their abilities and cease to try. The frustrated and unhappy child may act out anxiety by withdrawing or by becoming hyperactive. Many of these children are later identified as "problem learners" and some develop behavior disorders directly related to starting school too soon. A high proportion of children later channeled into remedial classes have birthdays in the September to December period.

- Research studies show that, physical disabilities aside, the urging of an immature child unsuccessfully through the school program is a contributing factor in more than 60% of the failures in school. Immature children who always have to struggle hard and often in vain to do things they could do more easily a year later, seldom reach their full potential and are generally insecure and unhappy. Kindergarten entrance can be delayed in cases where it is felt that the child is highly unlikely to be ready for Primary One the following year. Some children who appear to be developing slowly may profit from entering kindergarten at the regular time with the possibility of staying there for a second year.

- If there is doubt about a child's developmental stage, it is important that parents seek a professional assessment of the child's intellectual, social, and physical maturity through the office of the local school division. When the rate of developmental growth of a child born in the September to December period is not above average, the child will probably benefit if kindergarten entrance is delayed for a year.

- If parents decide to send the child to kindergarten for one and a half to two years, careful plans must be made to ensure that feelings of failure do not arise through the extended kindergarten experience. Unwavering support from a loving family can prevent damage to the child's self-concept. Ideas for parents who wish to aid in the development of their children are to be found in Chapter Seven.

- At the other end of the scale, there are children who demonstrate mature behavior but who just miss getting into kindergarten by a few days or weeks. A parent who feels that an underage child is ready for school may consider having that child's development assessed and the local school division office contacted. It must be remembered that the minimum age for admission to kindergarten is already very low; an even earlier start is appropriate for very few children. For these exceptional cases, parents and educators must cooperatively plan for the best interests of the particular child concerned.

Responding to Special Circumstances

Some parents, especially those with other preschoolers at home, may choose to provide a good home environment for the five year old, especially if the alternative is a long and physically demanding bus ride. Teachers can be asked to provide information about appropriate toys, learning activities, source books, and other references on parenting. Because television makes passive observers of children, requiring them only to see and to hear rather than use all five senses, parents who want to make the most of children's T. V. programs should provide craft materials for self expression. Wool, ribbon, paint, clay, pipe cleaners, boards, sand, and tissue paper lend themselves to creativity; children will also require tools and such materials as needles, scissors, hammers, tape and cardboard boxes for follow-up activities related to stimulating television, radio, or travel experiences. Where school division policies permit, enrollment later in the year may be considered to take into account such matters as the harshness of climate, family practices, and the need of the child to make friends with those who will be with him or her in Primary One.

For other children, early entry into kindergarten may be beneficial where this can be arranged. For example, a child whose home language is not the language of instruction may develop a stronger language base from two years in kindergarten immersed in the language of the school. Children of deaf parents have been allowed to come to kindergarten early in order to give them the language stimulation which is difficult to provide at home. Children with special learning needs may also benefit from early admission depending on the circumstances. Such early admissions require decisions involving parents and school personnel, and often attendance should be part time to reduce strain on the handicapped child. The school administration should consider carefully the work load of the kindergarten teacher before admitting special cases, and, in cases of severe handicap, the teacher may need help in caring for the child.

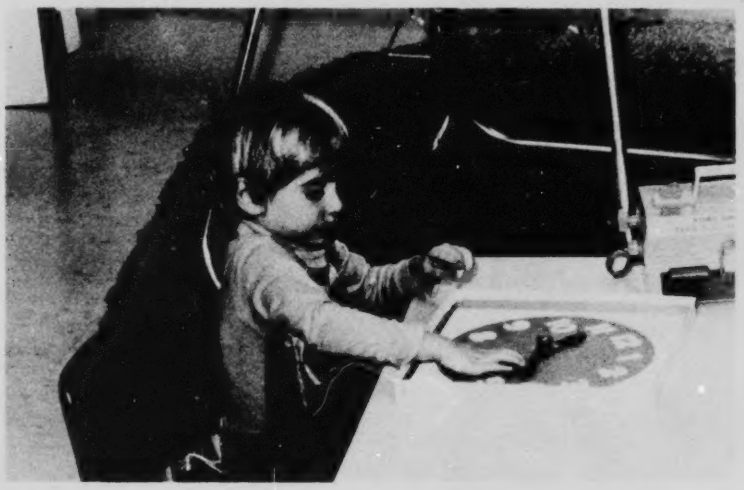
II. The Kindergarten Classroom

When most publicly-supported kindergartens were established in Manitoba, many school divisions converted regular classrooms, as they became available, into kindergarten rooms. In rural areas, in particular, portable classrooms or abandoned school buildings were moved onto school grounds for this new purpose; many school divisions created space by using basement areas. Only some of the schools built within the last decade, therefore, have areas that were designed especially for kindergarten. As school populations have dropped, some kindergartens have been moved into more suitable accommodation, and various patterns of classroom use have developed.

Kindergarten Children Require Ample Space

The room should provide safe, pleasant, functional, and stimulating surroundings so that the children have many opportunities to work and play, both independently and with each other.

In general, most early childhood teachers feel the need for more floor space than can be provided by a classroom built for regular classes. The integrated, child-centred, activity approach calls for space for a variety of learning and activity centres, for large and small group work, for quiet carpeted areas and for tiled areas that allow for play with water, sand, paint, and other messy materials. Usually the kindergarten child has no assigned place in the room, needing freedom for movement as he or she learns to act independently and responsibly. Kindergarten equipment and supplies also require adequate storage space. Innovative school teams, however, cooperate in meeting this requirement in a variety of ways, and resourceful and creative teachers find many ways to make the best use of classroom design and size. Two plans for classroom arrangements can be found in Appendix 5, page 211.



The classroom should have both carpeted areas and tiled areas.

Kindergarten Furnishings

As kindergarten activities are action-oriented and largely individualized, furnishings must be portable, safe, light in weight, and child-size. Floors, walls, and ceilings should contribute to absorption of sound. Where possible, the kindergarten rooms should be located on the ground floor with windows at children's eye level; an outside entrance reserved for kindergarten is an asset. The room should also offer easy access to bathrooms furnished with low toilets and wash basins and should have its own sink.

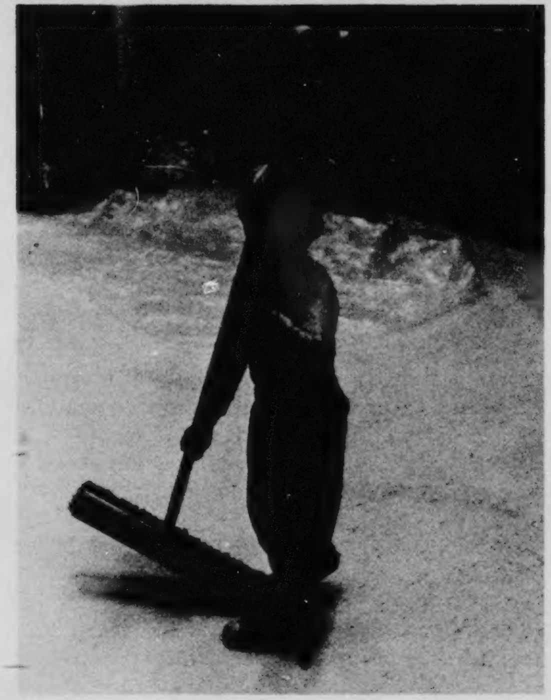
It is not necessary to provide a table and chair for each child; a dozen light stacking chairs and six or seven stacking tables should be ample. Built in storage space for use by the children is a necessity and each child should have a clothes hook and shelf or locker space for shoes and other personal items. There should also be some high cupboards for the teacher's use. Portable dividers, cubbyholes, shelves, and carts are recommended; a piano and a rocking chair should be provided, if at all possible. Because sand and water play are very essential parts of a kindergarten program, all kindergartens need a sandbox in the room or in adjoining indoor space. A sandbox lid can be used as a surface for drying paintings. A set of large climbing apparatus should be available at all times, and the items can be rotated and shared with other classes. The large climbing apparatus may have to be set up in the gymnasium or in an adjoining hallway.

The kindergarten teacher should have the use of a tape-recorder and a record player but usually can manage to share projection and gymnastic equipment. Suggestions for equipment and supplies are included in Chapter Five, Activity and Learning Centres; materials for each centre are also suggested, although many items will serve more than one centre. A list of catalogues from suppliers of kindergarten furniture and materials is found in the Related Resources section of the Bibliography at the end of this chapter.

All kindergartens should have a large sandbox in the classroom.

The Custodian and the Kindergarten Room

Obviously the kindergarten room will require considerable cleaning and maintenance. Children should be encouraged to put all the materials they use back into the proper places; teachers, themselves, are generally handy with the broom and cleaning cloths, but by the very nature of the program, spills and marks are inevitable. The room should be cleaned by maintenance staff after each session; particular care should be taken with the washroom facilities and drinking fountain, floors should be swept, waste material removed, and furniture dusted. Teachers generally should assume responsibility for cleaning and tidying of small equipment. Windows, walls, and floors will need a regular weekly cleaning and the entire room should have a complete and thorough cleaning during holiday breaks.



Learning the ropes.

Teachers and custodians should discuss how children can help relieve the burden of work. For example, would it help if chairs were stacked off the floor until cleaning is over? Are children being reasonably careful with paper scraps, paint, etc.? Do children need further training in use of the washroom? If there are signs of willful destruction these should be reported. The teacher should feel at ease in asking the custodian to do those things which are necessary to keep supplies, toys, and furniture in good working order. Generally, personal contact leads to a more pleasant working relationship. The teacher should train the children to regard the custodian as a valued friend and the custodian should not reprimand the children for the untidiness they cause.

III. Kindergarten Models

Shared Centre Space

The centre room is divided by a sliding partition which makes each room one and a half times its regular size. The original walls which separated the classrooms are given wide folding doors, and, in some cases, large holes are punched in the remaining portion of the support wall near the floor to provide crawling or tunnel exits and entrances.

The kindergarten teacher and the primary teacher cooperate in arranging learning centres in the shared middle space. This is a very sound practice since there are usually "readiness" children in Primary One. The need for this extra space will be most pressing to the Primary teacher in the early part of the school year and to the kindergarten teacher later in the year; both groups can use some of the facilities all of the time. Teachers in this shared space situation generally plan for the more active part of the kindergarten program to take place at the far end of the regular kindergarten classroom area and the quieter part of the primary program to take place farthest away from the combined area. Shared middle space becomes a type of transition area where kindergarten children are engaged in learning centres and individual projects, and where primary children can be more mobile and vocal than in their more formal learning areas. Thus Stage A and Stage B children have an opportunity to interact and to learn together. Stage A children become accustomed to what might be expected of them as they reach Primary One. Meanwhile, Stage B and Stage C primary children have further learning experiences in the relaxed and less structured atmosphere they enjoyed as kindergarten children. This "shared third classroom model" offers many teaching and learning advantages.

Kindergarten and Primary One Combined

In some schools, the kindergarten and primary programs have been completely integrated in a three-room space. The primary teacher assumes responsibility for those children developmentally ready for a Primary One program; the kindergarten teacher assumes full responsibility for the regular kindergarten group; and responsibility for the "readiness" children is shared by the two teachers. Stage B kindergarten children come in the morning and Stage A kindergarten children come in the afternoon.

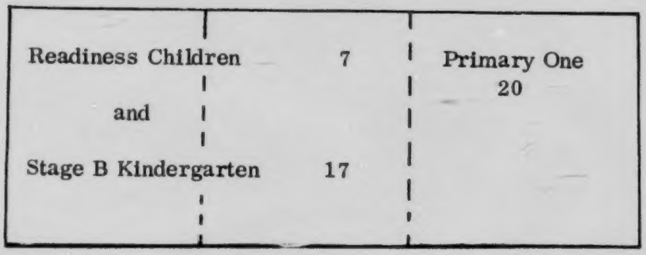
The more formal training of Primary One children takes place in the morning. During this time the kindergarten teacher concentrates on providing a meaningful program for the "readiness" group and the Stage B kindergarten children. The "readiness" children move to the Primary One teacher for the afternoon. This is an appropriate time for learning centres and a time for special teaching. The kindergarten teacher plans the afternoon program for Stage A children.

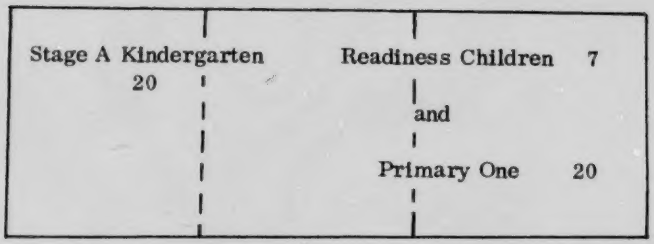
Movement of children between programs must be flexible. "Readiness" children who experience a developmental spurt should move into a full Primary One program and most of the "readiness" group will become Primary One children as the year progresses. Children who are not able to do this would probably be more comfortable in a full Stage B program, where kindergarten children who are developmentally ready have a built in opportunity to learn with Primary One.

Given two cooperating teachers who are committed to the principle of continuous progress, this plan works well especially for the child who is going to need extended time to complete Primary One. For the mature kindergarten child, there is also the opportunity to start formal learning earlier in the kindergarten year; this should be undertaken, however, only after careful assessment of a child's maturation and development and in consultation with parents.

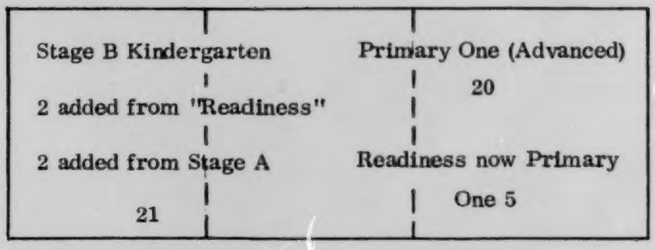
Possible distribution of 64 children

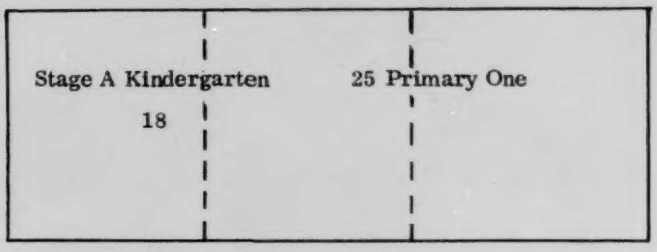
Fall term





Spring term





Two Kindergartens Combined

Where there are two double kindergartens in a school, teachers can develop two distinct programs for the activity periods. These may be in one large room with a divider or in separate classrooms. One program may be planned particularly to meet the needs of Stage A children and consist primarily of activity centres; the other program may reflect the needs of Stage B children and be a combination of activity centres and more structured learning centres. The teachers can alternate from program A to B and shift children as needs arise.

There are many daily learning experiences which the total class should share together such as most physical education activities, singing, rhythmic activities and drama experiences. This plan seems to be the next best plan to removing walls but can only succeed where there is a real "teaming" spirit on the part of both teachers who extend their concern to all children in both classes.

Low-Enrollment Kindergarten and Low-Enrollment Primary One Combined

At least one teacher and a regular aide are required. The teacher is responsible for the program for all children in both groups; where possible, the two groups share experiences but may be separated for some activities. While the Primary One children are involved in structured learning centres, in small group activities or are receiving individual instruction from the teacher, the kindergarten children under the guidance of the aide continue with small group and free play activities. The mature kindergarten child may, at times, enjoy and benefit from being involved with the older Primary One children in some of the learning centre activities. In the same way, Primary One children who need extended informal readiness experience can be comfortably involved in activities which meet their needs. Some teachers feel that this program is so successful that even when enrollment is sufficient to warrant completely separate classrooms, they prefer integration of kindergarten and Primary One children.

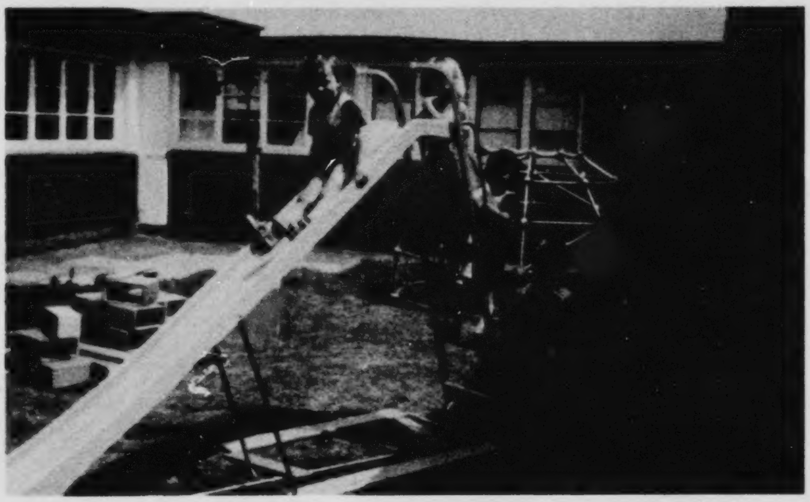
Transition Class

In situations where there are 18-20 children who would profit from an extra year in the primary division, it is recommended that a Transition Class be established. Instead of beginning formal instruction in reading and computation, these children will spend additional time in the early months of their second year at school involved in activities which are an extension of the kindergarten program; special care should be given to oral and aural language. As children become ready to learn to read or to deal with number concepts, they can move gradually into the Primary One program; care and time should be given to the establishment of good basic skills. At the end of the second year at school, these children may have been exposed to no more than half of a Primary One program. However, if they have confidence in themselves as beginning readers and spend a comfortable year in Primary One following this transition year, most children will continue to enjoy school and to achieve. Children who require a 4 year primary program gain more from spending the extra year in a transition classroom; the extra year in the primary school setting may be the "prime time" that a child needs to ensure continued success in learning.

IV. Desired Outcomes of a Kindergarten Program

Casual visitors to a well-run happy kindergarten may make the incorrect assumption that early childhood teaching is easy, almost effortless. The best kindergarten environments are the results of careful planning on the part of a teacher with sound pedagogical skills who has an understanding of children and demonstrates a genuine concern, respect and liking for them.

Keeping in mind the current philosophy of early childhood education (Chapter One), the characteristics of Stage A and Stage B children (Chapter Two), and current thinking about how children learn (Chapter Three), teachers of kindergarten children should endeavor to structure their programs with a view to assuring that as many as possible of the following outcomes are achieved. Teachers and administrators should bear in mind that these outcomes can all be the natural and positive results from joyful hours of play. Kindergarten is a time for fun and laughter. The program must essentially be one of play and interaction with peers and concerned adults.



We learn through play.

General Outcomes

A good program makes provision for the child to:

- enjoy natural play activities into which have been woven opportunities for talking, exploring, classifying, organizing, and interpreting so that the child can grow in understanding and begin to see relationships;
- gain satisfaction through learning in the enlarging social group;
- begin to think creatively and to develop unique learning patterns; and
- experience success through increasingly sustained effort and conscious use of thought processes leading to the development of good work habits.

Interpersonal Outcomes

The child:

- learns to share experiences with adults and other children, and to accept the limits of group experience;
- learns to trust others and is able to enter safely into warm relationships with other human beings;
- increases in ability to solve social problems, to formulate and modify courses of action, and to cooperate by respecting agreed ways of doing some things;
- learns both to lead and to follow;
- experiences the necessity of making choices, develops some of the skills needed in group and personal decision making, and realistically accepts the consequences of specific decisions;
- continues to develop a sense of fair play;
- responds increasingly to social reinforcement rather than to concrete rewards;
- recognizes that many people outside the family care about him or her;
- recognizes the necessity to develop language for a variety of situations (e.g., play group, store keeper, doctor, visitors in the home, visiting in other people's home, telephone conversation);
- engages happily in individual, parallel, and cooperative play.

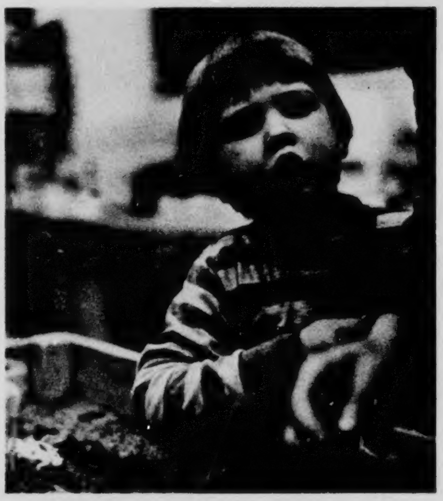
Given these supports, the child should become less distracted by anxiety, more trusting and more able to learn.

Intrapersonal Outcomes

The child:

- develops a positive and realistic self-concept in response to the image of self as reflected by others and from being allowed to grow as an individual;
- discovers areas of competence which bolster his or her feeling of being accepted and self-worth;
- experiences the personal strength and sense of worth which come from growth in knowledge and the ability to reason and solve problems;
- feels confident enough about self and others to risk making mistakes. The child recognizes that everybody makes mistakes and that this is an inevitable and acceptable part of learning and maturing;
- learns to verbalize feelings;
- is fairly confident about making choices;
- learns to concentrate for longer periods;
- becomes increasingly responsible for completing tasks;
- learns to care for self in dressing, eating, bathroom procedures, and tidying;

- sets realistic goals for self, learns to adjust to occasional failure, and reacts reasonably to criticism and correction;
- develops increasing self-control and a realistic acceptance of personal limitations and the shortcomings of others; and
- becomes increasingly resourceful about trying things different ways.



Reasoning skills and language skills are developing rapidly.

Cognitive Outcomes

The child enjoys an increasing ability to use his or her mind and is laying a foundation for the more formal learning of later developmental stages. These academic preliminaries are important but must not be forced. The teacher can include activities which help the child to:

- develop expressive and receptive language skills;
- become more sensitive to sensory stimuli and become responsive to the environment;
- become increasingly capable of making sensory discriminations;
- develop self-direction and independence;
- develop more mature thinking skills, to include thoughtful questioning and independent problem solving;
- symbolize ideas;
- classify and order the phenomena of the world around;
- understand spatial relationships of weight, height, size and shape;
- establish handedness;
- develop the habit of left-to-right eye movements;
- recognize the relationship between letters and sounds;
- store sensory impressions in the form of images;
- improve in auditory and visual discrimination; and
- grow in ability to listen, to follow directions, to recall main ideas and to react to stories.

In addition, the teacher can include or suggest activities which stimulate the child's interest in those preliminary skills necessary for writing, reading, and calculating. Such activities include:

- enumerating groups of things that can be touched;
- looking at picture books, counting items in a picture and offering personal interpretations of pictures;
- noticing words in books and on other objects and questioning the validity of personal guesses about what word symbols say;
- drawing pictures and being able to tell a story about what has been drawn;
- pretending to write (the child will possibly ask adults to read the doodling that has been written);
- choosing games that require matching and categorizing;
- discussing the concepts of more and less, larger and smaller, up and down, far and near, top and bottom.

V. Nurturing Growth and Development

Social Skills

Teachers will want to record each child's progress in the various developmental tasks. These lists should not be available to anyone except those adults directly involved with the child; charts indicating a child's proficiency should never be on display. Most small children generally give of their best and extrinsic motivation only adds another degree of frustration to the child who is young or developmentally slow.

Social Adjustment of the Child

Teachers and parents of kindergarten children should be aware that no matter how informal and homelike kindergarten is, and no matter how earnestly the teacher attempts to make school an extension of home, the child has adjustments to make. Because of the large number of children in a room or playground, some freedom has to be curtailed; there are more contacts than in the home or street; there will be more demands on skills with language, and for many children, school will force use of language quite different from any previously experienced; there are more rivals for the attention and help that the adult present can offer. Suddenly the child is living in two worlds, home and school, and experiencing some conflicts as a result. The demands on the child and the supports offered may differ widely in these two places. In addition, the school world may be split into several widely differing segments; for example, on the way to and from school, he or she may have to adjust to the behavior of older unsupervised children. On the playground, despite being with peers, the child may feel lonely and unprotected; the classroom environment, however, should create the feeling of being safe and wanted. More competition is experienced than is likely to have been encountered before; some of the competition will take place in a protected situation, but at other times there may be no protection. School personnel should do all that is possible to reduce unprotected competition by means of scheduling and room assignment and by creating a supportive school atmosphere.

Playing with other children on the basis of free competition has eventually to be learned, and the child has to achieve personal status. However, in the initial entry to the world outside the home, some adult intervention can protect the child who has to learn to play fairly, to know when it is appropriate to seek adult intervention, to accept reverses, to cope with some teasing, and to suffer some of the consequences of personal behavior. Like most other skills, these social skills are acquired and learned in a spiral fashion, starting with low-level skills, and help and patience from adults are necessary in this process. The child must be protected from pressures to behave in ways that are beyond his or her social capacities, and from situations that threaten personal security. For these reasons the kindergarten group should, if possible, have separate school entrances and be allowed to come into the room immediately upon arrival. Break and dismissal times may also need to be different from those of regular classrooms.

Some friendly teasing.

The Need to Teach Social Behaviors

Children coming to kindergarten are placed in a situation where they need to develop personal behavior patterns both with their peers and with adults. These children need help in recognizing that other people have equally important rights and that, to be happy and productive in a social setting, they must compromise and develop patience in adapting comfortably to new patterns of socialization. Children also need help in learning the language of social manners and respect. As children learn to adapt in the kindergarten community, they may also become more skilled in dealing with changing home and extended community environments. It is important, therefore, that parents realize that the teacher who is concerned with helping children to feel loved and secure, competent and creative, is contributing significantly to their social growth. Parents can actively cooperate by positively reinforcing the desired behaviors.

There is a real danger that, in concentrating on each child's personal feelings, adults may neglect to focus enough attention on that child's obligations to others. Children have to be helped to operate happily in groups, to defer satisfactions, and to find pleasure in cooperation and in generosity toward others. Children of this age are naturally egocentric and have to mature to the point where they realize they cannot always make decisions totally in terms of their own needs and desires. It should be remembered that in kindergarten and primary school, children are moving into a stage where peer approval becomes very necessary to their growing and changing concept of themselves. They need approval from others to feel good about themselves. The foundations for a happy pre-adolescence and adolescence may be laid in the early years.

The adults working in kindergartens must be perceptive, observant, and ready to guide. Opportunities to explain, to practice a new skill, or to reinforce one already being learned must be seized as they occur. A few simple rules can be formulated in group discussion periods with children and should be enforced almost without exception, for example, if it is agreed that a tricycle may be used only in a designated safe area, then this rule should be consistently respected.

Many children's stories, like Aesop's fables, lend themselves to helping establish patterns of social behavior. Children relate to the disobedience of Peter Rabbit, the selfishness and lack of consideration shown by Goldilocks and the perseverance and accomplishments of the little train who said, "I think I can, I think I can." They approve of the justice of the Little Red Hen's refusal to allow the Cat, the Dog and the Pig to share the loaf she made. Children feel more free to pass judgement on animals and supernatural beings met in stories than on the people in real life or in stories. However, story time should be a time for fun and should not be deliberately converted into a lesson on behavior; the lesson should come from the child's own perception on hearing or reading a story.

Many kindergarten teachers have found puppets a valuable aid in helping children explore behaviors. One teacher credits two puppets, Griselda and Archibald, for at least part of the thoughtfulness and courtesy demonstrated by children in her classroom. On occasion she uses the classroom puppets to offer praise for good behavior or to express disappointment for unacceptable behavior. The children are asked to make judgements and can be encouraged to use Griselda and Archibald to demonstrate how things might be done.

Speaking through the medium of a puppet can put some desired distance between the child and a touchy situation.

Tattling can sometimes be averted by suggesting that children talk to the puppets. The teacher or aide, through the voice of the puppet, suggests some ways in which the complainant might solve a problem through his or her own efforts; if necessary, the puppet can speak to the agressor. Griselda and Archibald can often discuss tender and touchy situations, giving children time and security they need at this early stage of their development.

Meeting the Emerging Academic Needs

Children in Stage A and Stage B are generally ready to develop rapidly in motor, communicative, and cognitive skills which are the foundations for learning. The teacher should be aware of these growth patterns and seize opportunities to foster their development. It is not the kindergarten teacher's responsibility to teach reading, writing, and mathematical skills per se, but an environment should be created in which pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-mathematics skills will emerge for the child who is developmentally ready to acquire them. The creative teacher will devise a variety of interesting and challenging activities and games to integrate the acquisition of such skills into the regular program. Some children develop special interests and reach out for abstract and symbolic learning at an early age; for those children who begin to read and to work with numbers, additional planning is required in order to offer activities for them. These activities should continue only as long as the children have these particular interests. The teacher must always recognize and accept individual learning patterns and characteristics. The important role of the teacher is to recognize and provide opportunities for learning.

The child's learning must come through play and if he or she develops more sophisticated ways of perceiving and of conceptualizing, the program will have enhanced and enriched the maturational development. At this stage playtime should not have to be sacrificed in order to complete paper and pencil tasks. Rigid mechanical teaching of skills which disregard the child's interests or developmental level has no place in a kindergarten program.

For children in Stage A or Stage B, the total learning environment should reflect the following major goals. These should be taught at receptive stages and should also be part of centre-activity.

Language Growth

The teacher:

- helps and encourages the children to enlarge and enrich their vocabularies;
- helps children to listen to the rhythmic and syntactical patterns of language;
- provides a model for language but respects the varying levels of language in the class;
- helps children experience the excitement of beautiful, expressive language and the power which comes from the ability to use language well;
- helps children discover that there is a power and permanency about the written word;
- helps children recognize that a statement in written form is not necessarily a statement of fact;
- helps children relate their spoken language to writing and reading.

Perceptual Growth

Through games, children are introduced to activities which require:

- increasing powers of visual discrimination;
- sharpening of auditory discrimination to include rhyming, hearing specific sounds, and repeating sounds;
- increasing ability to classify and categorize;
- increasing ability to arrange things into a series;
- increasing ability to continue a simple series of patterns;
- increasing sensitivity to all sensory stimuli.

Perceptual-Motor Growth

The child:

- establishes a pattern of handedness. Exercises such as hauling in rope, batting at a bean bag, and football kick-off should show the dominant and non-dominant sides of the child;
- engages in activities which provide directional variation and which also give hands and eyes practice in the left-to-right directionality needed in writing and reading.

Doing jigsaw puzzles requires visual discrimination and manual dexterity.

Body Awareness

The child:

- becomes increasingly aware of the position of his or her body in space. Kinesthetic activities develop awareness of body parts and how they function, and increase the sense of balance;
- needs to develop an internal reference for the relationship between the extremities of the body and the trunk. The information which comes from balance mechanisms, muscles, and sense organs must be collected and organized in the brain; children who have not developed a sound body image often experience difficulty in academic learning. Given the freedom to explore their own potentialities, children begin to develop an awareness of what they can do, thereby gaining a new respect for themselves.

Nurturing Curiosity and Creativity

Children who are awakening to the wonder and perplexity of their world have many questions to ask and are entitled to answers from their parents and teachers. These answers should be intellectually honest but stated in terms that children can understand. The child who is asking about lightning may have seen the flash of a short circuit and be satisfied that these two phenomena have much in common, but may be more satisfied if the teacher gets batteries and wire from the school science supplies and creates a "jumping" current.

Children are usually ready to accept the fact that there is much more to learn before they can understand fully and that opportunities for exciting learning will come later in school. Perhaps, because they are only just beginning to learn how to organize and interpret, children can hold contradictory explanations and not be troubled. They are also apt to cling to an old erroneous explanation even when offered a better one, and at this stage should not be unduly pressured to drop the old. It is necessary to make first explanations the kind that can be built on by accommodation rather than the kind that inhibit future learning.

It is sound pedagogy when children are helped to do simple experiments or are given appropriate pictures or materials to enable them to find their own answers. Children who do not receive some response to their important questions generally give up asking them. Blocking their natural curiosity seriously impedes future learning; curiosity must then be restimulated by a persevering teacher.

Creativity can be defined as "being able to think or express oneself in an original manner." Each child receives sensory stimulation and organizes this information in unique ways. Children who have their ideas ignored or ridiculed generally cease to be creative but rather try to produce what the teacher expects. A child who feels secure that the teacher will accept, understand, and praise his or her fledgling efforts will continue to be creative. The kindergarten child is not ready for consistently logical thinking and teachers can foster creativity by encouraging the child to think in ways that do not require realistic viewpoints or logic. Children enjoy fantasy and challenges like: "Let's invent a new sort of animal." Talk could centre around such animals, domestic and otherwise. Enjoyment can be found in combining any two, for example, the hippopotamus and the giraffe; then the child can be free to draw or describe the new animal, calling it a hipporaffe or a girapotamus, or devising a completely new name for it. Children will enjoy hearing some of the many nonsense poems written on similar themes.

As the child develops into a divergent thinker, the freedom of this type of thought may find expression in inventions, visual art forms, music, and literature. It is important that teachers do not stifle the child-like thinking which appears to them to be illogical. It is said that the science fiction of one generation can become the scientific fact of the next generation. While logic is a powerful tool for learning, creativity leads to originality of ideas and adds joy to life.

Creativity needs encouragement and stimulation, but it also needs protection. The child who grows up able to be creative when creativity is needed, and logical when logic is necessary, develops into a powerful thinker.

Meeting the Physical Needs

Physical Activity

The kindergarten child normally has an abundance of energy. Developing muscles demands plenty of daily opportunity to jump, run, push, pull, lift, throw, wrestle, dig, carry loads and build structures, if only to hurl them down. Tasks that demand that young children sit or stand quietly for more than a few minutes at a time work against their natural drive for activity. Kindergartens must provide space and opportunity for spontaneous movement as well as time for organized physical activities. There will be frequent quiet times but they should be short.

The trend in the physical education program is towards greater freedom and individuality of movement. The emphasis is on learning to move: where we move in space, what parts of the body can move, how we move ourselves and things, how we relate to others when moving. Much of the movement should be done to music. (For Movement Education see Related Resources at the end of this chapter.)

Many physical activities may take place in the classroom but it is also important that kindergarten teachers have access to the gymnasium or a similar area, a play room, and the outdoors. An acceptable physical education program provides for activities that:

- are vigorous enough to satisfy the child's need to be energetic;
- develop large muscles;
- develop coordination by means of manipulative activities that can be integrated into the regular activity centres;
- develop body awareness;

- incorporate movement education;
- develop response to basic rhythm patterns; and
- stimulate the growth of perceptual motor skills.

Keeping a large tarpaulin up in the air demands a lot of energy.

The Rest Period

Because kindergarten children are naturally very active, rest periods are necessary. The organized mat rest, which is part of some kindergarten programs and disliked and resisted by many children, can be made more palatable if music is played or a story told. In the half-day kindergarten, a relaxing period where children are allowed to sprawl in a restful position may well meet the needs of the tiring child. Many children who needed a rest period in September no longer require it during the latter part of the kindergarten year. Most children express their tiredness non-vocally. In cases where certain children seem perpetually tired the teacher should consult with the parents and the school nurse.

Small Equipment Activities

The gymnasium or play room should be provided with ropes, balls and pails, bean bags, hula hoops, balance beams, low see-saws, climbing equipment, and tumbling mats so that all children can be active during the entire physical education period. Children can be divided into several groups and moved on signal through a number of different activities. Helpers can supervise each activity; middle grade children have shown that they can do this well. As the teacher introduces a new activity, the helper watches for safety and curbs any disruption that might develop. Some of the activities should be designed to develop gross motor skills, to teach balance, and to give the children a sense of direction. During these periods the teacher is often able to observe characteristics of individuals such as handedness and the level of development of fine and gross motor skills. Following is a sample plan for rotating through small activity stations:

Station A: Tumbling (forward roll — broad jump to mat);
Station B: Hoops (obstacle course -- slipping hoop over body, crawling through, skipping twice, twirling on waist);
Station C: Balance Beam or See-Saw (walking forward, backward, with or without help, reversing in centres, walking up and down see-saw);
Station D: Climbing Equipment (free activity).

Suggestions for Large Group Activities

(a) "Leader" - A simple listen and do game

When leader calls "here" children run to one designated wall. When "there" is called children run to the opposite wall. When "everywhere" is called children have the freedom to run anywhere in the play area. On "nowhere" all sit down with knees drawn up.

This activity can be repeated by asking children to skip, hop, fly, etc. in response to commands.

(b) Punchinello - An active, child-directed signing game

Children form a circle and sing or chant as they move clockwise, "Who's coming here Punchinello, little fellow?" "Who's coming here Punchinello, little dear?"

A child is chosen to be Punchinello and goes into the centre. Punchinello must be ready to demonstrate some physical action such as bending arms, jumping up and down, dancing when children sing, "We'll do it too, Punchinello, little fellow. We'll do it too, Punchinello, little dear." As they sing they repeat the action that Punchinello has demonstrated.

A new Punchinello is chosen at the end of the verse. Until children become familiar with this game, the teacher may have to suggest activities. This is a satisfying game which involves every child and fosters physical coordination and language growth.

(c) Some other signing games that children enjoy are:

Bluebird, Bluebird Through My Window; Shoemaker's Dance; Hickory, Dickory, Dock; Paw, Paw, Patch; How D'Ye Do My Partner?; Pop Goes the Weasel; Hansel and Gretel Dance (Humperdinck); Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush; Sally Go Round the Sun; Did You Ever See a Lassie?

The Manitoba Department of Education publishes a catalogue of Physical Education and Recreational Media (films, video-tapes, books, printed aids). The section on free mimeographed and printed aids lists pamphlets that are especially useful to teachers with Early Childhood classes. The Perceptual Motor package provides useful suggestions for preschool physical education activities. There are also pamphlets on Dance and Music, Small Apparatus, Limited Area Activities and Primary Games. These are available from Curriculum Services Branch, Department of Education, Robert Fletcher Building, 1181 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 0T3.

Adventure Playground

Interesting outdoor playground materials can be constructed with tires, ropes, logs, ladders, and planks which, with close-supervision, can be used to provide children with excellent play activities. Some of the adventure playgrounds may be too complex and daring for young children, but most of them have areas suitable for supervised fun. Many schools have set up their own creative playgrounds. Kindergarten classes should use them in times provided exclusively for their classes. References for teachers or parents interested in setting up playgrounds are included at the end of this chapter.

Tires and logs can be used to construct an interesting outdoor playground.

VI. Suggestions for Orientation to Kindergarten

Pre-Registration: Last Week in April

In order to organize effectively for each school year and be able to arrange some activities that will reduce the "separation-anxiety" which may accompany venturing away from the security of home even for just a few hours, pre-registration to kindergarten is advisable. Publicity should be given to pre-registration programs through news media, through children already at school, or by notices in community gathering places. Older children are usually quite knowledgeable about prospective kindergarten students and can be used to deliver and return forms. The first form should be very simple, outlining clearly the regulations regarding age for acceptance and stating that a birth certificate will eventually be required.

Schools may have established policies about such matters as how children are divided for morning and afternoon classes, whether parents have a choice about which session their child attends, provision for transportation, and for meeting special needs. These regulations and policies should be outlined on a separate sheet which is retained by the parents.

Setting up Classes: Second Week in May

If pre-registration forms are returned by the second week in May, the school can determine requirements for teachers and classroom space. A thorough pre-registration program can prevent unexpected overloads and overcrowding, although some changes will take place during summer holidays and registration forms should be available to people new to the community at this time. Parents should be notified of their child's acceptance. If possible, they should be given the name of the school the child will attend and be told whether the child has been assigned to a morning or afternoon session. Along with the acceptance form, parents should receive a copy of the information sheet that the school uses; samples are included in Appendix 1, page 196.

Visits to the Current Year's Kindergarten

If all the new children come to kindergarten on a given day along with the regular students the pressure of numbers and the resulting confusion may frighten the new children and disrupt the program of the regular students. To avoid this, many kindergarten teachers invite groups of four or five children on successive days in June. The teacher talks to them individually and takes them for a tour around the classroom. If the kindergarten provides a booklet to "take home", the children could be given it at this time. While the children are visiting their future classroom, their parents can be meeting with the principal and the resource teachers to discuss ways in which parents can be supportive of the aims of the kindergarten and ways in which they can contribute to the program in a volunteer capacity. They should be encouraged to ask questions and to make comments; after all, their children are about to embark on an experience which is of vital concern to them and everyone wants the year to be happy and fulfilling. Parents should be made aware of any plans for a staggered entrance as they may require special baby-sitting arrangements.[1]

Parents can contribute their skills in a volunteer capacity.

Staggered Entrance in September

Many teachers find that they can establish a better relationship with each child if staggered entrance is planned. Children feel more comfortable if they begin this new experience in small groups. If staggered entrance is to take place, children and parents should know well in advance so the children are not disappointed to find that they have to stay home on some days of the first week.

1. Children are divided in groups of five

Day 1	Groups 1 and 2	(10 attend)
Day 2	Groups 1 and 3	(10 attend)
Day 3	Groups 2, 4 and 5	(15 attend)
Day 4	Groups 3, 4 and 5	(15 attend)
Day 5	All children attend	

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[1] Sample forms for orientation are found in Appendix 1, page 196.

2. A short staggered entrance

Day 1	Group 1 (1/3 of class attends)
Day 2	Group 2 (1/3 attend)
Day 3	Group 3 (1/3 attend)
Day 4 and 5	All children attend

3. The following elaborate 12-day plan provides for a gradual introduction to the kindergarten program in areas where children all live close to the school and where transportation presents no problem. This plan assumes that visits were made to the kindergarten by the children in spring.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Day 1	Teacher/student interviews
Day 2	Teacher/student interviews
Day 3	Teacher/student interviews

SMALL GROUP SHORT DAY SESSIONS

Day 4	9:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Group 1 attends
	10:20 - 11:30	Group 2 attends
	1:00 - 2:10 p.m.	Group 7 attends
	2:20 - 3:30	Group 8 attends
Day 5	9:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Group 3
	10:20 - 11:30	Group 4
	1:00 - 2:10 p.m.	Group 9
	2:20 - 3:30	Group 10
Day 6	9:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Group 5
	10:20 - 11:30	Group 6
	1:00 - 2:10 p.m.	Group 11
	2:20 - 3:30	Group 12

COMBINED GROUP SHORT DAY SESSIONS

Day 7	9:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Groups 1 & 2
	10:20 - 11:30	Groups 3 & 4
	1:00 - 2:10 p.m.	Groups 7 & 8
	2:20 - 3:30	Groups 9 & 10
Day 8	9:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Groups 1 & 2
	10:20 - 11:30	Groups 5 & 6
	1:00 - 2:10 p.m.	Groups 7 & 8
	2:20 - 3:30	Groups 11 & 12
Day 9	9:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Groups 3 & 4
	10:20 - 11:30	Groups 5 & 6
	1:00 - 2:10 p.m.	Groups 9 & 10
	2:20 - 3:30	Groups 11 & 12

LARGER GROUP SHORT DAY SESSIONS

Day 10	9:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Groups 1, 2, & 3
	10:20 - 11:30	Groups 4, 5, & 6
	1:00 - 2:10 p.m.	Groups 7, 8, & 9
	2:20 - 3:30	Groups 10, 11, & 12
Day 11	9:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Groups 1, 2, & 3
	10:20 - 11:30	Groups 4, 5, & 6
	1:00 - 2:10 p.m.	Groups 7, 8, & 9
	2:20 - 3:30	Groups 10, 11, & 12

REGULAR CLASS FULL SESSION

Day 12	9:00 - 11:30 a.m.	All Morning Students
	1:00 - 3:30 p.m.	All Afternoon Students

Parent Evenings

It is advisable to plan two evening meetings so that parents will have a better chance to attend. Publicity should be positive so that the meetings are seen as important and attendance at them is planned for. In addition, parents should be advised that these meetings are not for the purpose of discussing individual children but are general information sessions.

Among the displays set up around the classroom, could be:

- articles, books, magazines which support the classroom philosophy for children:
  - books on parenting, home-crafts for children;
  - magazines and book subscriptions suitable for 5-year olds;
  - information on available community facilities for new residents - clinic, parks, library, playgrounds;
  - professional literature on educational topics;
- a snack table featuring nutritious food such as fruit juice, nuts/raisins, cheese, biscuits, fruits, vegetable sticks;
- centres with a chart at each explaining the values to the child of block play, water play, sand play, house centre, large muscle centre, listening, viewing, reading corners, painting, construction area, modelling, drawing and printing areas; and
- children's painting, stories, and construction items.

The program could include the following:

- introductory remarks by the principal;
- introductory remarks by the teacher giving some personal background and a five to ten minute statement of philosophy;
- short (to one-half hour) film, video or filmstrip on pertinent topics for parents of 5-year olds. Topics could include: parenting, language development, value of play;
- five to ten minute statement of goals and routines for year, as the teacher sees it;
- brief suggestions on how parents can help support school program;
- snack break;
- questions and discussions.

At the conclusion of the program, a resource sheet can be given out on which parents indicate their occupations, what contacts they have which could be helpful to the teacher in planning specific outings or finding materials for the classroom, and any specific skills they have which they are willing to share with the kindergarten. At this point, the teacher can solicit volunteers for the program.

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Related Resources

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Holiday Oriented Games
Notes on Movement Education
Elementary Fitness Concepts and Activities
Perceptual-Motor Program (6 titles)
Lesson Plans for Primary Physical Education
Winter Games
Creative Dance in the Elementary School
Dance for Children
Folk Dance Records

In addition, the curriculum guide, Primary Physical Education, 1976, is available from the Curriculum Development Branch.

Some references for those interested in constructing adventure playgrounds

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Adventure Playground Information Kit 1 and Kit 2
Available from CMHC, 402-310 Broadway Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 0S6

Creative Play Catalogue
Playgrounds from Paris
Paris Playground Equipment Ltd.
21 Scott Avenue, Box 125
Paris, Ontario, N3L 3E7

Mrs. Polly Hill
Children's Environments
Department of Architects Planning
Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Head Office
Montreal Road, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0P7

Miss Jan Knight
Canadian Council of Children and Youth
328 Chapel Street
Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7Z2

National Playing Fields Association
25 Ovington Square
London, England, S23 1LO

1. Adventure Playgrounds and Children's Creativity
2. Adventure Playgrounds
3. Adventure Playgrounds for Handicapped Children
4. Child's Right to Play
5. Play Huts
6. Playground for Blocks of Flats
7. Safety on Adventure Playgrounds
8. What is an Adventure Playground?

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Chapter Five
Curriculum Resources

The following chapter offers practical suggestions that teachers can use in implementing a kindergarten program based on the philosophy stated earlier in this sourcebook. It presents sample timetables and sample lessons with emphasis on activities to develop language and thinking skills; it gives detailed plans for setting up and using Activity and Learning Centres; and it provides a section on Field Trips.

I. Planning a Daily Timetable

In order to plan a daily timetable the teacher should keep in mind the following:

- The activty is the curriculum. This will be as broad or as narrow as the teacher and the children make it;
- The teacher is aiming to develop as much responsibility and independence as possible for each child;
- Rather than give answers or pour out information, the teacher asks questions to keep the children thinking. The teacher provides a model of a questioning, observant, attentive person;
- The teacher is a facilitator, a resource person, a careful observer, a cautious diagnostician;
- The program welcomes additional resource people;
- The activities are varied enough in content and challenge so that all children will find things at their levels of interest and ability. The teacher is alert to observe when a child might be ready for something more challenging and has ideas and activities in reserve;
- During activity time, the teacher observes the children and records specific behavior.

Aides, volunteers, or cross-age helpers are especially useful during learning centre activities. They can provide materials, encourage children, foster growth in social skills, and help children learn to be tidy. These helpers should show concern for each child's well-being and rely on the teacher for direction and guidance. As a trained professional, the teacher must take on the responsibility of guiding and training helpers so that the basic principles of preschool education are understood by all who work with the children.

Young helpers have a tendency to show little children how to do things and to do things for them. However, the kindergarten children need encouragement to try doing things for themselves and need the assurance that they can learn. Children feel comfortable when they know that there is an adult available to share their excitement in accomplishment and to help them when necessary.

> Educate children to become independent. This cannot be accomplished by doing for them what they can do for themselves.

The models of timetables given take for granted that materials and equipment are arranged in centres, e.g., art, housekeeping, mechanical. Centres offer a logical and convenient means of organizing the many materials necessary for a good kindergarten program thereby facilitating the children's selection of activities.

Teachers who use centres find that they facilitate directing children to certain activities when the need arises. In addition, when centres are spread around the walls they can quickly be "closed-up" to provide more floor space for those large group activities requiring active movement and total-class participation.

In any kindergarten room, a few guidelines must be set so that children learn to respect the play space of others.

Sample Daily Timetables

Model One: Two and One-Half Hour Session

9:00 - 9:30 a.m. Children arrive, are greeted individually and have the opportunity to chat with the teacher and friends as they "settle in". Children choose the areas where they want to work or play. The teacher is available to observe, guide, find materials and make suggestions for developing or enriching the games. The teacher contributes to the smooth running of what is essentially a free play session.

9:30 - 9:55 a.m. Large group activity is organized. Children who are absorbed and active in the activities begun in free play need not join in the large group activity until they are ready. The large group activities could include:

- singing;
- singing games;
- finger plays;
- seeing new toys, discussing them, and learning how to use them;
- games to develop thinking skills;
- oral language development.

When large groups meet for specific purposes, all children should take part:

- for discussion, evaluation, and planning;
- to consolidate routines;
- to share visitors and media presentations;
- to pay special attention to a visitor, a pet or a birthday child;
- to look at a fragile object which cannot be handled except under supervision, for example, a fragile music box.

10:00 - 10:30 a.m. Activity and Learning Centres. Those children who are still absorbed in the game or activity they began first thing in the morning should be allowed to continue whereas others may wish to begin a new activity. Adults become involved in helping, in conversations and in evaluating. The teacher may wish to introduce a new game, toy or activity centre to one group of children, but should not disrupt the play of children who are absorbed in an engrossing activity. Children are encouraged to plan their play so that they are happily involved and not moving aimlessly or destructively from centre to centre.

10:30 - 10:45 a.m. Clean up and snack time.

10:45 - 11:10 a.m. Physical activities and games - outdoors or in the gym.

11:10 - 11:25 a.m. This time should be varied to suit the needs of children and to balance the day's program; example, number games followed by a story, rhythms and records, library visit, structured language teaching, crafts.

11:25 a.m. Prepare for dismissal.

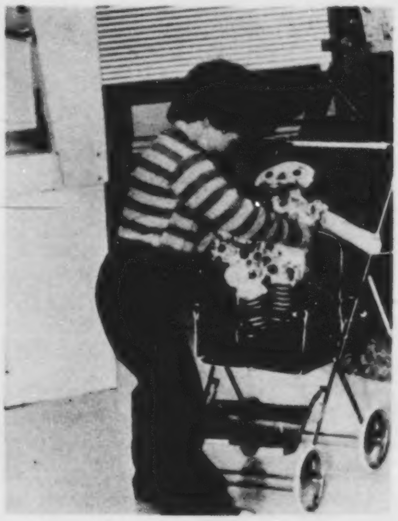
Children should be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. so that they are safely off the roads during the peak traffic periods and when the other school children are en route home. Children who have to remain at school all day require facilities for resting before lunch.

If children require help crossing streets, patrol officers or others must assist.

Model Two: Two and One-Half Hour Session

8:45 - 9:05 a.m. The teacher greets and chats with children. Overseeing and/or helping with entering routines that include undressing, changing into running shoes, setting mittens or boots to dry, is casual. The teacher inquires of as many children as possible "What activity do you plan to start with today?", or "Which centre will you go to first today?", or "Do you remember what you decided yesterday that you'd finish up first thing today?"

9:05 - 9:30 a.m. Free choice of a constructive work or play activity. The teacher mingles with groups, commenting positively and asking questions, and helping where necessary, especially in planning the next step of an individual child's project. Language growth and creative expression are the goals being met.



A quiet activity for first thing in the morning.

9:30 - 9:40 a.m. The teacher signals a stop to all activity. Children gather and sit in the group space. Routine opening procedures can include discussion on the number of children present and absent, the number of girls or boys present, and special news of the day. Discussion can include the name of the month or day (yesterday, today, tomorrow), the weather, school visitors. This is a time for making supportive, brief comments on some positive coping skills observed during activity time, an interesting word used by one of the children, a cooperative arrangement worked out in a group, a social problem for the group to solve.

9:40 - 9:50 a.m. Planning time

- Children discuss current themes or projects. Recalling any pertinent routines or rules becomes part of planning the next steps.
- A new art medium, game, piece of equipment, book or record, craft idea, method of construction, or visitor is introduced.
- Children are asked to consider what they would like to do from a list of 2 or 3 alternatives given verbally. "Continue the activity you began this morning", or "After you've tidied up the activity you left as we came to the group time" are expressions which guide choice.
- On direction, the children return to their previous activities. Phrases must be chosen with care so that 15 children do not get up and move at once: "The children who need to tidy before going to a new activity may go now"; "The children who wish to continue painting (playing in the sandbox, making pictures, working at the construction table, etc.) may go now."

9:50 - 10-25 a.m. Continued activity time. The teacher and any other adults (aides, volunteers, visiting parents, student helpers) move from group to group or child to child, facilitating whatever positive things are happening. Adults engage in as many conversations with children as possible, print any stories children want done on their paintings and pictures, and in general respond to children's immediate needs. Someone oversees the use of the new centre or activity, e.g., cooking, finger-painting, rhyme games.

10:25 - 10:30 a.m. Clean up and help others clean up. Everyone is responsible for the entire room.

10:30 - 10:40 a.m. Snack. Consideration for others, good manners, and sharing should be focal points in snack time. Nutrition awareness should be a factor.

10:40 - 11:05 a.m. Whole body movement - physical education period in gym if available and outdoors when the weather is fine. An area of the room should be cleared if necessary, or the hallway or other uncluttered space used.

11:05 - 11:20 a.m. Quiet group time. The teacher groups according to the number of available adults, but keeps his or her own group largest so that the other helpers are not overtaxed. This is a time for singing, fingerplays, word or number games, storytelling, sharing-time, verbal interpretation of pictures, and other meaningful discussions with children.

11.20 - 11:30 a.m. Dressing for dismissal and home-time routines.

11:30 a.m. Dismissal.

Model Three: All Day Program

Half-day kindergarten sessions are preferable to whole day sessions but when children have to rely totally on school buses for transportation, full day kindergarten on alternate days can provide a viable alternative. Children may become over-tired at the end of the day so teachers must be alert to the need to provide some relaxing activities.

9:10 - 9:30 a.m.	The use of manipulative materials is the focus. The teacher works with small groups and individuals.
9:30 - 9:45 a.m.	Language development. Activities are singing, chart making, discussions, auditory discrimination, listening.
9:45 - 10:00 a.m.	Oral language development using games.
10:00 - 10:15 a.m.	Physical activities. Activities are dancing, rhythm activities, singing games.
10:15 - 10:35 a.m.	Break for snack.
10:35 - 11:30 a.m.	Directed activities - number concepts - science and social studies centres of interest. Children move into activity and learning centres.
11:30 - 12:00 noon	Children continue to work at self chosen activities.
12:00 noon - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch hour. Supervised by grade six students.
1:30 - 2:00 p.m.	Use of gymnasium with older pupils as helpers. Focus on activities using small equipment.
2:00 - 2:20 p.m.	Rest period with room darkened and music playing.
2:20 - 2:30 p.m.	Sensory training.
2:30 - 2:45 p.m.	Games to develop perception and coordination.
2:45 - 3:00 p.m.	Break.
3:00 - 3:30 p.m.	Stories, dramatic play, art, sharing time.

II. Suggestions for Group Activities

Language Growth

Language growth is of great importance to the five year old. Naturally, some of this will take place every part of the day as the child listens, speaks, follows directions, asks questions and verbalizes while at play; however, the teacher should plan some definite structured teaching to insure that language growth development is occurring.

Example 1: Exploring a Topic
Animals

In group discussions, the children are asked to name all the animals they know. A flip chart is made, each page having the picture of an animal with its name written underneath, arranged alphabetically. The class runs through the chart daily, adding pictures and names. The next stage of this project encourages children to describe how each animal moves. The teacher may need to supply such vocabulary as frisk, lumber, waddle, prance. Children can demonstrate each verb by moving in the way the animal moves. Several verbs are printed under the name of the animal, for example, squirrel: jumps, runs, scampers, frisks, flips, dashes, flashes. A third stage challenges children to supply descriptive words (noisy, chattering, scolding) which the teacher also records. Children may want to record the sound the animal makes.

A poem useful at this time

Frogs jump
Catepillars hump
Worms wiggle
Bugs jiggle
Rabbits hop
Horses clop.

Snakes slide
Hawks glide
Mice creep
Deer leap
Puppies bounce
Kittens pounce
Lions stalk
But I _______ walk.

Integrating this interest

- in gym period, the children can be asked to "lumber like an elephant", "spring like a tiger", "crawl along like a tortoise".
- at dismissal, five children at a time are given animal names and told to give their cries on signal. They get ready for home and five more give the cries of animals. Everybody gets a turn.
- Who am I? Five children are given animal names and sit inside the circle. The children in the circle are asked questions: "Are you big, Alice?", "Do you say meow, Tommy?". As the animal is identified, the child joins the outer circle: the last child left in the circle wins in the Animal Riddle Game.
- charades - one child acts like an animal and the other children guess the identity.
- classification - any descriptive category is suggested. The flip chart is brought out and the class decides which animals belong in the category.
- fairy tales about animals can be starting points for creative drama. The children are encouraged to use natural and undirected language. These stories lend themselves to using hand or finger puppets.

Example 2: Learning a Letter Sound

The letter "J"

Word games are used for the development of language, not of the particular letter.

When some children have reached the stage where they realize that letters represent specific sounds, a "J" (or any other letter) week can be organized, an activity that children particularly like.

- Children listen to the teacher calling the roll. As he or she calls a name like Jack or Jennifer, or George, that starts with the "J" sound, all children clap. Children enjoy choosing a J-name for themselves for the remainder of the week. It is also fun to decide to change their names by substituting "J" for the initial consonant or putting a "J" in front of the name; Paul becomes Jaul and Ann becomes Jan.
- A table is arranged with "J" objects and pictures. The children can say these nouns; they can also make the "J" form on the floor, on their open palms, or by bending a strip of paper. (Try to get the left turn!)

. The teacher may ask

"What 'J' foods could we have for breakfast?"
"What 'J' foods could we have in sandwiches?"
"What 'J' foods could we have for a picnic?"
"What 'J' foods could we have for dinner?"

. Children can select "J" foods from a group of foods displayed.

. At story time, the teacher might say, "I have a 'J' feeling. What is it?" - joy, jealous, jumpy, jolly. "Are we wearing any 'J' clothes?" - jackets, gym-shoes.

. This "J" talk can be continued with "J" songs, finger-plays, animals, baby furniture, flowers, toys. A "J" named puppet could ask questions that have to be answered by "J". Some children could fingerprint this letter on shiny paper. Children can use large felt pens to follow instructions such as, "Print a red 'J' ", "Print two yellow 'J' 's".

. In Physical Education, the teacher can ask, "What kind of 'J' movements can we make?" - jump, jiggle. Actions for "J" -
light jumps,
heavy jumps,
wide jumps,
jump ahead,
jump back,
jump from side to side,
do a standing jump forward,
do a running jump forward,
jump and land with feet together and apart,
jiggle like jelly,
join hands with a partner and jump together and alternately,
jump in a circle, a triangle, a "J" pattern, a zig zag pattern,
jump like popcorn popping, a rabbit, a frog,
play Jack in the Box or Jack be Nimble,
spin a hula hoop and watch it jiggle as it begins to "die down".[1]

Example 3: Other Language Activities

. Learning plurals: The teacher says, "one egg". Class says, "two eggs". Repeat for other words.

. Learning animal baby names: The teacher says: the cow has two ____________,
the mare has two ____________,
the cat has five ____________,
the hen has ten ____________,
the goose has eight _________,
the duck has six ____________,
the bear has two ____________,

. Completing rhymes: Rhyming is one of the skills used in word attack. Children who can substitute consonants to unlock new words improve rapidly in ability to recognize new words, e.g., make to take, lake, cake, rake. Having children supply the rhyming word helps them to acquire both listening and rhyming skills.

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[1] There may be a few children who cannot yet hear a "J" sound or recognize the "J" symbol. Let these children participate in all activities but do not demand responses unless the child offers to make them; they may be developing the sound sub-vocally. The Child Speaks by Margaret C. Byrne is included in the Bibliography at the end of the chapter. This book has ideas for speech improvement for kindergarten and first grade children, suggestions for practice with most consonants, and an excellent adaptation of the story of Jack-in-the-Beanstalk which uses "J" at least three dozen times.

Examples

1. Mother went fishing in her boat.
   She caught six fish but lost her (coat, float, note).

2. The barber went to cut my hair
   But first he twirled me in the (chair, air).

3. The little fishes three
   Were looking straight at (me).

4. We do not like tar
   On our new (car).

5. Peter thinks it is just dandy
   When he can buy a stick of (candy).

6. Hail hits the ground
   With such a loud (sound).

7. If I am seven
   You are (eleven).

8. I'll go fishing in the brook
   While you sit and read your (book).

9. When our cousins came
   We had a baseball (game).

10. In the water I like to float
    Or go speeding in a (boat).

11. Simple Simon sang a song
    Very sweet but not too (long).

12. Funny Fanny with a box
    Found a tiny little (fox).

13. If they serve you beef and pork
    Please do use your knife and (fork).

14. The filling station you must not pass
    If your car is in need of (gas).

15. Did you know my little kitten
    Has never worn a furry (mitten)?

16. Paul said he would like a tomato
    But Betty wanted a sweet (potato).

17. He held the apples out to you
    And said that you might take just (two).

18. I think that I shall choose a ship
When I start out on my big (trip).

19. He said "one, two, three"
Then he opened the door with a (key).

20. The nonsense song "Down by the Bay" uses rhyme:

Down by the bay where the watermelons grow
Back to my home I dare not go
For if I do my mother will say

(Child sings a nonsense verse)

Did you ever see a pig with a wig?
Down by the bay.

or

Did you ever see a dog on a log?
Down by the bay.

or

Did you ever see a bear on a chair?
Down by the bay.

- Reading poems to children is an excellent way to introduce vocabulary and strengthen listening skills. A list of useful poetry books is included at the end of this chapter.
- Following directions: Have the children listen to all the directions and then do exactly as they were asked, e.g., "put one hand on your head and the other hand on your knee. After you have put your hand behind your back, put your head in your lap."
- Using action pictures: Describe the action in various ways, for example, the boy is (running, racing, hurrying, speeding); the deer is (leaping, jumping, springing, escaping).
- Using directional and relational words: Command of the directional and relational words improves fluency of expression, for example, up, down, over, under, across, through, in front, behind. Use a chair and have children place an object in various positions with reference to this chair, for example, under, on, in front of.
- Practicing a listening activity: Use jingle sticks, bells, rhythm sticks, tambourines and triangles. Children sit in a circle, each with a band instrument; one child comes into the centre and is blindfolded; the teacher signals to one child in the circle to play his or her instrument; if the child in the centre cannot identify it, he or she removes the blindfold and points to the instrument that was played. Everybody says the name of the instrument.

Practicing a listening activity.

- Developing visual memory: Arrange five objects or pictures in a line; all close eyes; the leader removes an object and closes up the space. What was taken? Where must it be if things are to be in the same order? As children begin to know the letters of the alphabet, they can be used in place of pictures.
- Learning to classify: "Raise your hands if what I say is clothing. Fold them if it is not. Hat, fence, shirt, skirt, bib, clock, carrot." ". . . if what I say is fruit. Apple, orange, lettuce, potato, glass, banana", etc.
- The teacher names a class object (e.g., tools). Children call out items belonging to this class and the teacher records them. This can be extended to sub-classifications. The teacher asks for garden tools, carpenter's tools, mechanic's tools and children decide which tools on the list fit into any given sub-class. Alternatively, the teacher can name a group of objects (e.g., rug, carpet, linoleum, tiles, mats) and the children decide on a name for this group.

  N.B. Peabody Kits provide excellent pictures for classification activities.
- Using language experience charts: Language experience chart making has proved to be a productive method of providing group experience in pre-reading for all children in the kindergarten. Many children will begin to read on their own because of the experience they gain from making and "reading" a group chart. All children will enjoy contributing to the discussions and seeing their ideas put down in writing.

  Used judiciously, experience chart making can provide regular exposure to reading without forcing those who are not yet ready to read. Those children who are capable of profiting from reading instruction will pick up sight words and letter sounds and begin to use context clues; those who are not may pick up some additional readiness skills. As long as no pressure to read is built up and there are no implications that those who read are superior to those who do not, working with charts offers many clues to teachers about which kindergarten children are ready for reading instruction.
- Teachers become adept at recognizing a subject that will "spark" discussion. A topic may have become timely because of a film shown, a picture discussed, or a happy experience that all have shared. Discussion should enrich the child's language and possibly introduce or clarify a concept. When children become familiar with the chart story pattern, they usually suggest subjects they would like to "write about".

- After discussion, the children will have ideas they want to contribute to the chart story. They may be ready to suggest a title but often the title is not decided upon until the chart is developed. The teacher prints the children's suggestions using a felt pen on large chart paper.
- The teacher offers comments about words, letters, and punctuation but accepts the construction and vocabulary in the language offered by the children.
- The teacher reads the story several times and then the "readers" repeat the sentences aloud while the teacher points to each word. It is important to encourage children to read in a natural speaking voice. No word-hopping!
- If a word occurs a number of times it can be underlined and may become a sight word for some children. Children may be given opportunities to match words or letters. Rhyming words can be repeated and noted. To test comprehension, ask such questions as:

  "What do you think happened next?"
  "Was that a sensible thing to do?"
  "Do you like the child in this story? Why?/Why not?"
  "Is this bug an insect?"
- Encourage children to express their own thoughts. Questions such as, "That was unfair, wasn't it?" almost forces an agreement with the teacher.

Note

Language experience charts are widely used as beginning reading devices. If language experience charts are used frequently, those who are ready to read will reveal it by learning. The questions of whether or not to teach reading in kindergarten and of which children are ready to learn are answered!

Storytelling

Storytelling offers many opportunities for extending and deepening children's language. For detailed suggestions on storytelling see Appendix 4, page 206.

Listening to a story.

Finger Plays and Singing Games

Finger plays and singing games, not only improve language but can be used to teach science, mathematics, health, and social studies concepts. Some of the useful purposes served by finger plays are that they:

- provide a very simple form of dramatic projection;
- appeal to the imagination;
- extend the attention span of the immature children;
- provide a technique for bringing forward the timid, shy or unresponsive child without singling him or her out;
- lend themselves to speech correction;
- relieve physical tension;
- provide the child with something to be repeated at home and taught to others in the family.

1. Thumb Man
   Thumb Man says he'll dance (bounce thumbs on floor)
   Thumb Man says he'll sing (raise thumbs, wiggle)
   Dance and sing my merry little men
   Thumb Man says he'll dance and sing
   (Can be repeated for Tall Man, Ring Man, Little Man)

2. (Each finger up)
   Tommy Thumb's up
   Tommy Thumb's down;
   Tommy Thumb's dancing
   All around town.
   Substitute the following names in turn: Peter Pointer, Toby Tall, Ruby Ring, Baby Darling, All the fingers.

3. Tommy Thumb, Tommy Thumb (hands behind back)
   Where are you?
   Here I am, here I am (come out one at a time)
   How do you do?
   Repeat for: Peter Pointer, Toby Tall, Reuben Ring, Baby Finger, and Finger Family

4. The carpenter's hammer goes rap, rap, rap
   And his saw goes, see, saw, see
   He planes, he measures, he saws, and he hammers
   While he builds a house for me.

5. Roll, roll, roll your hands
   As slowly as you can
   Roll, roll, roll your hands
   As quickly as you can
   (Change to shake, clap, wave, etc.)

6. Creeping, creeping, creeping comes the kitty cat
   But the bunny with its great long ears jumps like that.

7. Choo, choo, choo
   The train runs up the track (run up arm to shoulder)
   Choo, choo, choo
   The train comes running back (run fingers back down).

8. Here's a cup, and here's a cup, and here's a pot of tea
Pour a cup, and pour a cup, and have a drink with me.

9. Here is a beehive (folded fist)
Where are the bees ?
Hidden away where nobody sees.
Soon they'll come flying
Out of the hive
1--2--3--4--5--(one finger out at a time)

10. On my head my hands I place
On my shoulders, on my face
On my hips and at my side
And now behind my back they hide.

11. This little hand is a good little hand
And this little hand is its brother
They wash and they scrub
And together they rub
Till one is as clean as the other.

12. Open, shut them, open, shut them
Give a little clap.
Open, shut them, open, shut them
Put them in your lap.
Creep them, creep them, creep them, creep them
Right up to your chin
Then slowly creep them, creep them, creep them
To your lap again.

13. Here's a funny bunny with ears so funny (raise 2 fingers)
And here is its hole in the ground (make hole with fingers of the other hand)
At the first sound it hears
It pricks up its ears (straighten fingers)
And pops into its hole in the ground (put finger into the hole).

14. Jump right, jump left
Jump up and down
Face left, face right
Turn around and around

15. Here's a cocoon
On a twig in a tree
Something is stirring
Let's wait and see

Something comes out
With wings folded tight
Now, they are spreading
All ready for flight

It's a beautiful
Beautiful butterfly
Away it goes flying--
Goodbye! Goodbye!

16. I am a circle
Round like a pie
I am a triangle
Three sides have I
I am a square
My sides are four
I am a rectangle
Shaped like a door

17. Here's a giraffe who is tall, tall, tall
Here is a mouse who is small, small, small
The mouse who is small will try, try, try
To reach the giraffe who is high, high, high

18. Five little kittens all black and white (hands made into a fist)
Sleeping very soundly all through the night
Meow, meow, meow, meow, meow. (Each finger raised in turn on "meow")
It's time to get up now.
This finger play can be done using puppies, sucking calves, ponies or zebras in place of kittens.

19. Choo, choo, choo . . . (rub palms together in a circular motion to make a noise, slowly at first, gradually increasing speed)
Too-too, too-too, too-too . . . (keeping hands rubbing fast and call too-too for whistle)
Choo-choo, choo-choo, choo-choo . . . (rubbing hands gradually more slowly)
Ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong . . . (pull the bell)
Hear the engine puff, choo-choo-choo,
Hear the whistle blow, toot-toot-toot,
Hear the big bell ring, ding-dong-ding,
Hear the brakeman shout, "All aboard".

20. Jack in the box
Sits so still
Won't you come out?
Yes, I will.
(Children crouch on floor and then jump up.)

Pease Porridge Hot
(slap knees, clap hands, slap partner's hand)
Pease Porridge Cold
Pease Porridge in the pot
Nine days old
(slap knees, clap hands together, slap child's right hand with your right hand, clap hands together)

Some like it hot
Some like it cold
Some like it in the pot
Nine days old
(same with left hand; clap hands together, slap child's hand)

21. The little train went up the track (hands run up arm)
It went toot, toot,
And then it came back.

The other train went up the track (other arm)
It went toot, toot,
And then came back.

22. When I was one year old (crouch)
I was very small
Now I'm ______ years old
I'm very, very tall. (stretch up high)

23. Ten little squirrels sitting on a tree
The first one said, "What do we see?"
The second one said, "A man with a gun"
The third one said "Let's run, let's run"
The fourth one said, "Let's hide in the shade"
The fifth one said, "We're not afraid"
Bang went the gun. You should see them run.

24. Clap up high
Clap down low
Hop up and down
And point your toe.

25. I never run across the road
I look to the left and right
I never run--I only walk
When cars come into sight.

26. Whenever I cough, or sneeze or sniff
I do it in my handkerchief.

27. Knock at the door, (hit forehead with fist)
Peep in, (raise eyelid slightly)
Lift up the latch, (touch tip of nose)
Walk in. (put finger in mouth)

28. See my piano,
Five keys in a row. (curve fingers and rest on a table)
Some keys will sound high,
Some keys will sound low.
To play the piano,
Each key has a turn:
Start--one, two (press down each key so that it lies flat)
Then--three, four, five.

29. Windshield wiper, windshield wiper,
What do you do today?
Slip-slap, slip-slap,
I wipe the rain away.

I hold my fingers like a fish,
And wave them as I go,
Through the water with a swish!
So gaily to and fro.

30. This verse can be used as a game. Children march to a tune and to the actions.

With one hand to slap, slap, slap (on knees)
With two hands to clap, clap, clap (hands together)
With one eye go wink, wink, wink
With two eyes go blink, blink, blink
With one foot go hop, hop, hop
With two feet go plop, plop, plop

31.	Here is baby's tousled head	(closed fist)
	He nods and nods,	(bend fist back and forth)
	Let's put him to bed.	(bend other arm, tuck fist into bended elbow)

32.	Here's a nest for Robin Redbreast,	(cup hands to form nest)
	Here's a hive for Busy Bee,	(fingertips together to form hive)
	Here's a hole for Jacky Rabbit,	(fingertips together to form hole)
	And a house for me.	(interlock fingers, knuckles up, for house)

33. Here's a doughnut so big and fat,
Here's the hole, but you can't eat that!

34. I wear a big and funny hat
and glasses on my nose,
My beard is l-o-n-g and snowy white
and reaches to my toes!
Pumpkin, pumpkin, round and fat,
Turn into a jack-o-lantern just like that!

35.	Here is a girl and here is her bed;	(raise index finger of one hand)
		(hold palm of other hand out flat)
	Here is her pillow and here is her head.	(place thumb of same hand on palm)
	She wraps herself in the covers tight;	(place finger across palm resting on thumb)
	And this is the way she sleeps all night.	(wrap fingers around finger)
	Morning comes, she opens her eyes,	
	Back with a toss the covers fly;	(open palm)
	Up she jumps, is dressed and away	(raise index finger)
	She runs around and plays all day.	(use index finger)

36.	Little Arabella Miller	
	Found a fuzzy caterpillar	
	First it crawled upon her mother	(right hand walks up left arm)
	Then upon her baby brother	
	Oh! said Arabella Miller	
	Take away that caterpillar!	

37.	Little Robin Redbreast	(Crouch like bird with two hands behind back like
	Sat upon a rail	bird's tail)
	Niddle noddle went his head	(nod head)
	And wag went his tail	(use hands to make tail wagging)
	Niddle noddle went his head	
	And wag went his tail.	

38. A little groundhog
I'm a little groundhog, short and stout
On Groundhog Day I always come out!
If the sun is shining then my shadow I will see-
If the sun's not out, then you'll only see me!

Shine, sun, shine! We'll have winter six weeks more.
Shine, sun, shine! Cause I want to snore.
If you do not shine and my shadows not out,
"Spring is here!" everybody will shout.

It's only a tale.
It's not really true.
I made it all up
To please me and you.

39. This old man, he played one (raise one finger, etc.)
He played nick-nack on his thumb; (pound on other fist)
Nick-nack, paddy wack,
Give a dog a bone (clap hands)
This old man goes rolling home. (roll hands)

This old man, he played two,
He played nick-nack on his shoe;
Nick-nack, paddy wack, etc.

Three - on his knee
Four - on the floor
Five - on his side
Six - with some sticks
Seven - up to heaven
Eight - on his plate
Nine - all the time
Ten - over again

40. Rig-a-jig-jig
Rig-a-jig-jig and away we go
Away we go, away we go,
Rig-a-jig-jig and away we go
So early every morning

Children have partners and make a circle with partners facing each other both hands joined. Sing once just swinging hands. Slip step to right to the music on second playing, without singing.

41. (Tune: O What Shall We Do With a Drunken Sailor?)
What can I do with both my hands (use hands to describe words)
What can I do with both my hands
What can I do with both my hands
Early in the morning.

Give a little clap and shake them all over
Give a little clap and shake them all over
Give a little clap and shake them all over
Early in the morning.

What can I do with both my feet, etc.
Give a little clap and shake them all over, etc.

What can I do with all my body, etc.
Give a little clap and shake it all over. (clap hands and feet)

42. (Tune: London Bridge)
Head and shoulders
Knees and toes, knees and toes, knees and toes
Head and shoulders
Knees and toes
Eyes, ears, chin and nose.

43. (Tune: Little Brown Jug)
Stand up straight, reach up high
Stretch up more to touch the sky
Bend right down and touch your toes
Straighten up and rub your nose
Ha-ha-ha, see, see, see
Oh how agile we can be
Ha-ha-ha, see, see, see
Oh how agile we can be.

44. Rainy Day (Tune: Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush)
What shall we do on a rainy day,
Rainy day, rainy day?
What shall we do on a rainy day
When we can't go out to play? (pretend to open large umbrella and place it on shoulder)

We shall go to the store today
Store today, store today
We shall go to the store today
Under a big umbrella.

We shall go to visit a friend, etc.
We shall go and splash in the puddles
We run out to bring in the mail

45. Pop Goes the Weasel

The boys form a circle with hands joined and the girls skip around outside. On the word "pop", the boys lift their arms and the girls go through to the centre. The girls form the circle and repeat. Vary the method of dividing the class. Those with blue eyes on the outside, all others on inside. Those with long hair on the inside, all others outside. Those whose first name begins with A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, on inside, all others on outside. Those with birthdays in ______________. Those who have brothers; sisters. Those who have been on a train; an aeroplane.

Note: Gender is only one way for grouping; kindergarten teachers need to consciously avoid sex stereotyping such as consistently placing "girls first" in line-ups or games. "Girls against boys" has little validity in children's games.

46. The Caterpillar
Caterpillar, brown and furry,
You are never in a hurry.
Munching, munching, munching leaves
Eating anytime you please.

Wrap up tight and curl up warm
You'll be safe from winter's storm
When the summer sun is high,
Come on out, a butterfly.

47. Raking Leaves
I like to rake the leaves
Into a great big hump.
Then I go back a little way,
Bend both my knees, and jump!

Thinking Skills

Children should have many informal opportunities to sort objects, arrange them in categories and to discuss these activities with interested adults. Such activities provide excellent opportunities for children to acquire new vocabulary and sentence structure patterns. As children mature, they can more easily handle structured exercises in classification; such exercises contribute to concept formation and develop logical thinking. The teacher can use a large file of pictures arranged alphabetically, collections of small objects, and a box of shapes of various sizes and colors. The Dienes attribute blocks, offering the dimensions of thickness, shape, size, and color are useful here, too. Children's original "reasons for grouping" should be accepted in a positive way.

Sample Activities

Having arranged a group of pictures or materials, the teacher asks the children to:

- select objects with one or two given properties;
- select objects which lack a certain property;
- select objects which have one given property but which lack another;
- look at objects which are grouped and find what the common property is;
- arrange groups with a common property. Discuss whether other given objects can join the group;
- choose four unrelated objects. (Some children can handle complex categorizing challenges.) Select a fifth object which could be grouped with one of the original four. Children state the reason why the fifth object belongs to one of the original four. Example: house, leaf, book, coat. Does flower belong with any of these? "Flower goes with leaf because it grows" is the most likely answer. In these exercises children might make suggestions for grouping which, though not completely accurate, show that the child is thinking. Example: "Flower goes with book because there are flowers in books." "You thought hard to get that one. Are there flowers in all books? What do you think of Andrew's answer about growing things?";
- use attribute blocks to divide objects into sets. Example: set of red shapes, set of large round shapes (N.B., some children are not able to handle two attributes);
- encourage practical decisions on how toys should be grouped on shelves;
- arrange objects in a series using color, shape, size. There can be simple patterns and quite complicated ones, e.g., the teacher forms a pattern using five objects and the children complete the pattern in reverse order;

- arrange a series. Have the children close their eyes. Some objects are removed; what was taken? An overhead projector works well for this activity;
- arrange a series in which one object does not fit into the classification. Who can take away the incorrect one? (Wooden beads are good for this);
- use strip cards with pictures such as a boy, house, barn, butterfly. Children "read" the pictures aloud the first time and decide which picture does not belong. Read again, but children remain silent when picture which does not belong is touched. This can be done with rhyming strips: goat, coat, hat, boat;

Additional ideas for grouping and patterning are found later in this chapter in connection with the centres for encouraging manipulative-perceptual and mathematical learning.

Social Studies Themes

- Division of labor is necessary and contributes to our safety and convenience. The role of doctor, nurse, newspaper carrier, principal and others can be explored in dramatic play. Field trips to observe people at work help children understand, for example, how food gets from the grower to the table, how mail is handled, how traffic is controlled. To be effective, such trips must be preceded and followed by discussions.

  Children should be helped to recognize that people such as firefighters and police officers have been assigned tasks which individuals would have difficulty in performing for themselves. Those who carry out these tasks set limits for everyone's behavior and these limits must be respected if we want society to function.

- Human rights must be upheld. Children need help in learning to respect the rights of others and in protecting their own. They need to feel self-respect. They have to discover what behavior is socially acceptable. This can be accomplished, in part, by bringing in as visitors, people of foreign and native origins, workers, celebrities, handicapped persons, and persons of differing age groups.

- Our society is made up of many cultures. Each family has its own special customs, traditions, and history. Holidays and special events offer opportunities for learning about the past and about other people's cultures. Teachers should take advantage of opportunities to allow children to share in the celebrations in which some group is rejoicing in events of the present or past.

- Everyone should help to preserve and enhance the environment. Most children discard things no longer useful to them at any given moment and parents and teachers have to work hard to train children not to litter and waste. By late kindergarten, children begin to be fascinated by life cycles and can learn about the value of birds, earthworms, and dragon flies. They are also interested in endangered species. This is a good time to discuss with them why they should not gather flowers indiscriminately, pull plants up by the roots, play on areas where people are trying to get grass to grow, or break branches from young trees.

  If children's perceptions are clarified and thinking about social problems is encouraged, many other useful concepts will begin to form. The child who is interested in maps and globes can develop a good vocabulary related to geography. Children at this stage, are learning to clarify terms used to describe time and space. They can form valleys and mountains in the sandbox, talk about yesterday, last week, tomorrow, next week. This is also a good time to clarify the vocabulary of family relationships, e.g., grandparents are, at the same time, fathers/mothers of my parents; what does aunt, uncle, cousin mean; how can the same person be my aunt, my cousin's mother and my father's sister? These are practical situations where children can gain the understanding they will need when dealing with sets, subsets, and intersections.

  Drama can be useful in exploring social studies themes.

- Pretend to be lost
  Where do you live? (number and street)
  What is the name of the town or city in which you live?
  What is your phone number?
  Describe your house for me.

- Pretend that you have lost a dog
  Who can help you find it? (Radio, SPCA, newspaper, police)
  You must describe the dog exactly. (Encourage an accurate description)
  Are you offering a reward? (Discuss the wisdom of this)
  Now, Celia, you may phone the radio station to ask them to advertise. Peter, will you be the secretary at the radio station and insist that Celia give you enough details about the dog?
  Repeat the same role-playing to report loss through the newspaper.

- Other role-playing suggestions:
  - You have found a dog. What do you do?
  - Discussing plans with the family for a birthday party;
  - Going to the hospital;
  - Tidying up after a picnic;
  - Traveling by train, plane, ship, helicopter, bus;
  - Pretending to be at the airport, post office, etc.;
  - Saying you are sorry when you break or lose something;
  - Losing an article at school;
  - Giving specific directions to a blind person.

Science

In these groups, the teacher can arouse curiosity about the physical environment and satisfy the interests already expressed. Children have opportunities to gain new vocabulary and to learn to make precise statements. Children must be allowed to handle objects under observation wherever possible. A milkweed seed pod must be manipulated to be appreciated; the children should feel the texture of the outer covering, the lining and the seeds, and they should look for the symmetry of the seed rows, watch a seed take-off and smell the scent of the plant. A successful discussion will invariably lead the children to question why the plant is called a milkweed. When they do ask, the teacher will be glad to have brought along some of the less-ripe stems as well.

In the daily integrated program, teachers will find opportunities to encourage the natural curiosity which children have about the physical world. They can help children understand basic, but powerful ideas in science using the everyday materials brought into the classroom. Children enjoy bringing gourds, pumpkins, spruce boughs, pets, foods, seeds, and autumn leaves to share with others. Pumpkins can be rolled, cut, tasted, and smelled, and the seeds provide taste treats if they are soaked in brine and then roasted. Boughs of conifers have a distinctive feel and smell, both when they are green and when they have dried out. The wonder and beauty of autumn leaves are not due to their color alone; children should be allowed to smell, touch, crush them and walk through them to hear the crackle and rustle. They should enjoy the pungent odor of burning leaves and know that the return of the leaves to earth fits into the life cycle. If it is possible to provide microscopes, children can look closely at the leaf scars. The scab protects new cells forming just as the scabs on their sores protect the new skin forming. Children should observe that some trees shed their leaves in winter, but others do not. Why? They should examine winter buds to see that the leaves for next year are neatly packaged to await the warmth of spring. Black poplar leaf buds are large and twigs will bud if brought indoors in the late fall. The catkins are especially exciting in December and January.

Children enjoy caring for a classroom pet.

Children should be encouraged to handle soil containing leaf-mould and to note that the leaves are becoming food for new growth. The fundamental ideas of science can be discussed with children at their level. The first grasp of an idea may be a tentative one, but as the child grows older, he or she can build on these basic ideas which will be met again in progressively more complex forms. The child's understanding will be deepened through experience.

The teacher who has a good scientific insight will not give a child explanations that have to be unlearned. There is wonder but not magic in the sudden appearance of mushrooms; thunder and lightning are not evidence of a celestial battle. Do not be afraid to give straight forward scientific answers to children's questions. They may not fully grasp what you say, but will know that there is an explanation which they will eventually be able to understand.

Wherever possible, the child should be helped to see order in nature, to see cause and effect relationships, and to accept such principles as gravity, conservation of energy, and matter. Children may be more concerned about specific objects rather than about general principles. If this is the case, wait until they have had enough concrete experiences that they begin to feel the need for generalizations.

It is never too early to make the child aware of human dependence on the natural environment and the obligation to conserve the environment for future generations.

The Manitoba Department of Education Curriculum Guide, Science K-6, 1979 (Kindergarten section), deals with such topics as Plants and Animals, Properties of Objects, Size and Position of Objects, Time and Events and subdivides them into concepts. Suitable activities and reference materials are suggested. The teacher should be aware of the concepts to be developed and of the responsibility to plan meaningful activities and to respond to the children's lively interest in their environment In kindergarten there is no specific body of content which must be covered.

Teachers should encourage the children to:

. observe carefully;
. offer their own theories about cause and effect;

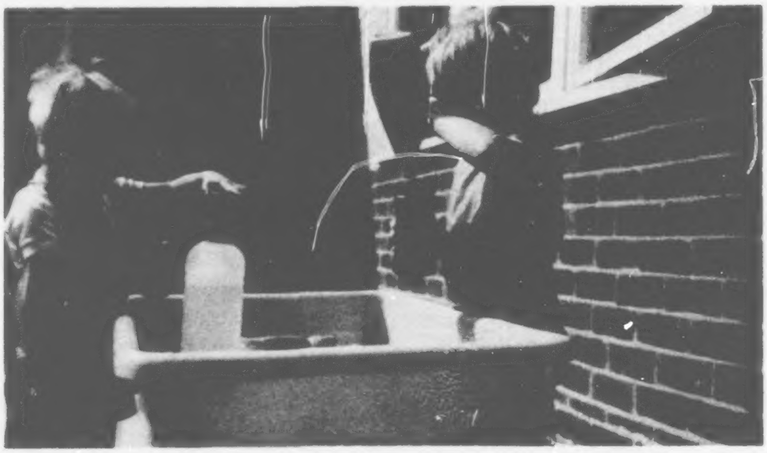
- predict outcomes;
- conduct simple experiments;
- be willing to change their opinions in the face of new evidence;
- make and test generalizations;
- browse through children's science books;
- handle natural objects and simple tools.

Suitable science activities include:

- growing a plant in sunlight and another in a gloomy place;
- watching a fish breathe;
- observing potato sprouts;
- looking at winter buds;
- observing how bulbs, cuttings, branches and vegetable tops grow in water;
- observing the changes that take place when vegetables mould, milk sours, vegetables (such as carrots) become dehydrated;
- growing celery in colored water to see capillary action;
- observing materials - dissolving, solidifying, liquefying, evaporating;
- observing changes in weather.

Specimens and tools that can be used in science:

- plants
- aquarium
- terrarium
- pebbles
- shells
- cocoons
- cones
- magnifying glasses
- microscope
- thermometer
- balloons
- scales
- clocks
- leaves
- grasses
- bark
- parts of a bee hive or a hornet's nest
- bulbs
- duck wings
- seahorses
- mirrors
- camera
- specimen bottles
- tubing
- sponges



By activities such as pouring liquids from one bottle to another, children learn about mass and volume.

> Young children learn best when information is given in response to their own questions.

Health and Safety

In kindergarten, health and safety can hardly be considered a formal curriculum area. The health and safety habits which children develop and the knowledge they acquire about nutrition, sanitation, and body care should result from discussions and practices which are integrated into the daily program.

Health Habits

- Washing before lunch and after toileting.
- Using a handkerchief or tissue.
- Learning to blow one's nose when necessary.
- Developing regularity and independence in toileting.
- Developing a positive attitude toward eating.
- Enjoying nutritional food at snack time.
- Brushing teeth.
- Taking care of clothes and dressing to suit the weather.
- Resting and sleeping sufficiently and regularly.
- Learning to trust the nurse, dentist, and physician.

Safety Habits

- Wearing non-skid shoes on shiny floors.
- Moving carefully in "no running" areas.
- Putting toys and equipment away safely.
- Learning to use gymnasium equipment properly, e.g., balance beams, mats, trampolines.
- Learning to use tools safely and in the designated areas only.
- Being alert to avoid bumping others with body or vehicle.
- Reacting calmly and sensibly during fire drill.
- Observing the rules about the use of electrical outlets and appliances.

Teacher Responsibility

It is necessary to establish basic rules for the use of tools and equipment such as saws, hammers, heavy blocks and planks, scissors, knives, electrical plugs, and record players. However, the best rules are the ones children make for themselves when they discuss their own limitations. Children readily accept that they are not yet strong enough, fast enough or confident enough to do certain tasks. The teacher should not be overanxious and restraining. Children have to develop judgement and take some risks if they are to establish the inner controls which will keep them safe and secure when not under supervision.

Health changes rapidly in childhood. The teacher must be alert to notice skin infections, watery or pink eyes, unnaturally flushed faces, sore throats, and other symptoms that signal distress or disease. A child who becomes unusually querulous and whose feelings become hurt easily may be running a temperature.

Parents should be advised early in the term to keep children who are even slightly ill at home, no matter how insistent the children are that they want to come to kindergarten. Any injuries children receive at school should be reported immediately. Parents should be asked to come and get any child who has received a blow on the head.

If children are to develop independent health habits in kindergarten, they need toilets and basins so they can look after themselves. Many teachers find that agreeing on a simple term for urination and defecation simplifies explanations for the child. Accidents in toileting and failing to reach a receptacle when vomiting occurs should be treated in a matter of fact way. Most teachers keep an emergency supply of clothing on hand. Diarrhoea and vomiting should always be reported to parents.

Potential health and safety hazards must be recognized in order to protect children. The teacher should insist that hot radiators be properly covered, torn floor covering replaced, and toys with sharp edges removed or sanded.

If the child is to learn good eating habits, the food provided at snack time must be chosen with care. Milk, fruit juice, crackers, freshly cut vegetables and fresh and dried fruit are recommended. Snack time can be a learning experience if food is discussed, eating manners emphasized, and children are given a share in preparing and setting out the snacks. Occasionally food from a cooking activity centre can become the special snack for that day.

The teacher's admonitions and his or her own positive attitude to nutrition, bed time, cleanliness, and courtesy may do a great deal to support the parent who is trying to establish good health and safety habits at home.

Films, verses, finger-plays, drama, field trips and visitors such as doctor, nurse, dentist, firefighter may all be used in reinforcing good health and safety habits, especially in those out of school activities over which teachers have little control. Discussion and examples may help children to learn to:

- behave safely on the bus;
- fasten seat belts;
- look before crossing streets;
- avoid coming onto streets from behind parked vehicles;
- obey traffic lights and patrols;
- play off the street in safe places;
- be very careful on ice or in water;
- report home before going elsewhere after school especially in cold weather;
- understand how to use the Block Parent service.

Adults have to remember to practice good health and safety habits consistently. Children learn by example.

Art

The curriculum guide Art K-6, Department of Education, Province of Manitoba, is available on request. The guide includes goals of art education and techniques for making various art projects. Many excellent books are listed in the bibliography. The committee responsible for producing this guidebook recommends that teachers purchase a copy of Wachowiak, F. Emphasis Art. 3rd ed. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1977. Provision has been made for the purchase of this book as a teacher reference through the Manitoba Textbook Bureau.

Stages in Learning

Through art, young children are encouraged to use their imagination to discover, explore, and express their feelings and ideas in a visual form. Such experiences are basic to the development of a happy and creative child and should be part of the daily program.

When they come to kindergarten, young children are operating in the manipulative and scribbling stages in art in keeping with their natural development. They need time to experiment and may not be very concerned with the product of their activity.

Experimenting with materials is as creative as any products which result.

Art activities in kindergarten encourage children to use all their senses thereby contributing to their sensory and perceptual growth. This growth makes it possible for children to become more aware of form, that is, large elements of shape and finer elements of detail, both of which are essential to their visual recognition of letters and numbers.

Some educators argue that the development in children's art follows a genetic pattern which unfolds as the child passes through each maturational stage in order; others believe that perception is learned and that the child must be taught to see details, shapes, and form.

Sometimes, emotions enter into children's art. Objects important and interesting [illegible] them may be represented as large, regardless of actual size, e.g., children returning to school after seeing cows milked may draw them with enormous udders.

Kindergarten children are often very proud and conscious of what they know but cannot interpret visually all that they know about the physical world. For example, all children know that they have a body but, if they are at the tadpole stage of drawing people, they will not incorporate the trunk in their drawings of people.

On the other hand, children will sometimes try to express all that they know about the physical world into their art work. To take another example, a child may make an X-ray representation of a house, drawing the outside shape of it and then placing the people and furnishings that are in the house inside that shape.

One might feel that cognition is interfering with perception at this stage. In art, both process and product are equally important to the child. Through the process of painting and the product that results, the child's perceptions are clarified visually. It is extremely important that teachers accept these personal expressions as worthy! Children's art must not be judged by adult standards. (See Emphasis Art.)

III. Activity and Learning Centres

All centres can be either Activity and/or Learning Centres, depending on how they are used, e.g., children playing in sandbox often begin to count their sandpiles, compare size of castles, print in damp sand.

The Learning Centre structures play activities in order to teach a specific skill or concept for which the child is ready and eager. In the Activity Centre, the child learns through free-play. Activity Centres are designed for the use of both Stage A and Stage B children. However, as Stage B children begin to reach out for materials that challenge their perceptions and their newly developing skills, Learning Centres should be set up for them. These centres should contain materials deliberately chosen to bring about the specific outcomes desired.

Since centres are designed to individualize the kindergarten program, children should not be moved through centres according to a regular rotation list. However, teachers should feel free, on occasion, to direct children to given areas when the need for a specific type of activity has been demonstrated, e.g., give several children exclusive use of a piece of equipment so that they can practice some skill they are anxious to improve - balance beam, matching, ring toss.

No part of the kindergarten day should be blocked off into subject areas. Content that could be considered to belong to a definite curriculum area should find its way into the integrated program.

All centres should have a language component. Mastering the language component is more important than mastering content materials at this stage. However, growth in language and knowledge can be mutually supportive.

Practicing walking on a balance beam.

Housekeeping Centre

All children enjoy "playing house". This centre:

- affords excellent stimulation for language use and development;
- provides opportunities to recognize and consider social and cultural differences;
- encourages role-playing and decision making which involve organization and planning;
- provides practice in social skills of respecting property rights, sharing, cooperating in work and play, taking part in group enterprise, doing one's share of family duties;
- encourages creative and divergent thinking;
- provides opportunities for classifying and organizing into categories;
- provides a practical situation in which the child becomes responsible for putting things back where they belong.

Basic Equipment

- stove and refrigerator
- sink or dishpan
- iron and board
- doll carriage
- crib or cradle and bedding
- stroller
- table and chairs (or use classroom furniture)
- telephone
- dolls and clothes
- housekeeping tools (broom, mop, etc.)
- pans, dishes, cutlery, cooking utensils such as egg beater
- bowls
- baby supplies
- gardening and other outdoor tools
- carpentry and home repair tools

Suggestions for Use

The equipment in the housekeeping centre should reflect local homes. Children also enjoy "long ago" utensils like scrub boards and tubs, potato masher, churns, and cream separator.

Manipulative and Perceptual Activity Centre

This centre contains the same type of manipulative toys the child may have used in nursery school or at home. Activities will be designed to enhance gross and small muscle development and to develop sensory discrimination. Many toys can be used in both unstructured play as well as in structured learning; dominoes can be piled up and knocked down or arranged with matched ends. Many materials from this centre will be transferred to other centres as the need arises.

Purposes

Children will have opportunities to develop:

- better eye-hand coordination with respect to gross motor skills as they thread, turn, twist, screw, and fit objects;
- fine motor skills as sensori-motor organs mature;
- intellectual skills as they work with shape, color, and space;
- ability to make fine discriminations in size, weight, use, and texture;
- skills in categorizing;
- ability to see patterns and put objects into a series.

Materials

- variety of materials for block building; large and small blocks, wedge blocks, building sets--Legos, attribute blocks, pick-up stix, nesting cups and blocks
- boxes or pails of: cars, pegs, balls, pictures, china figures, buttons, shells, shapes, paper doll clothes
- commercial matching and grouping card games and sets
- magazines
- farm, garage, street sets
- commercial games such as Spill the Beans and Higgety Piggety
- scissors, paste
- beads and styrofoam pieces for stringing
- popsicle sticks
- play dough and plasticine
- bean bags
- textured materials
- lock box
- boot to lace
- zipper and button trainer
- tinkertoy
- ring toss
- puzzles graded as to difficulty
- crayons and felt pens
- templates of shapes
- paper cups and plates and milk cartons
- sets of alphabet letters in wood, plastic and sandpaper
- form boards
- work bench
- rock-a-stack
- Montessori Equipment (for teachers who are trained to use it)

Tidying the Centres

Teachers need to supervise, assign specific tasks, and assist with finishing touches when children have done as well as they can. Labelling the places where things are kept is helpful for the teacher and eventually some children will be able to read the labels and determine where things go. A variety of distinctive containers for particular objects helps the child organize materials and experience satisfaction in putting things away.

Suggestions for Use

In these centres, children should be encouraged to explore materials, make up their own games, and to participate in free play. They should be encouraged to talk both to their companions and out loud to themselves if they wish. Whenever possible, the teacher should draw out the less vocal children by asking questions about what they are doing. The following activities are among those suitable for the centre:

- moving objects from one container to another;
- standing toothpicks or pegs in holes outlining a picture made on a card;
- classifying the same materials in a variety of ways (e.g., buttons: large and small; two holes or four holes; with shanks; by color; I like it or I don't like it; shiny or dull; roll or won't roll);
- putting together puzzles, playing with pick-up-stix, playing spill-the-beans to develop eye-hand coordination;
- placing pegs in a peg board;
- dressing and undressing dolls;
- practicing with zippers, buttons and holes, shoe lacer, sewing cards, lacing cards;
- stringing beads or copying bead designs;
- copying block designs;
- classifying texture cards (rough, smooth);
- using attribute blocks giving one attribute (e.g., all the blue ones), two attributes (e.g., all the large, thin ones), three attributes (e.g., all the thick, small, red ones).

Sandbox and Water Play

All kindergartens should have a sandbox. Sandbox and water play activities are happy experiences for most young children. They play completely oblivious to everything else for long periods, filling and dumping pails of sand, building castles, and running trucks on imaginary roadways. Children find pleasure in filling a bucket with water and dumping it or pouring it on the sand. If space is limited, a table could be sacrificed to make room for the sandbox, which should of course, be at a height to allow access without strain.

Sandbox play is a favorite activity among children.

Sand and water play also contributes to socialization. Children talk and play very naturally when playing with these elements. This sort of play is often a welcome "leveller" as the shy and less skillful child can join in and have a feeling of accomplishment.

> The sandbox learner has spontaneous opportunities to share, learns to respect the territory of another child, to participate in groups and to plan cooperatively.

Visual-motor-coordination is improved as children consciously try to make their hands work for them. It is likely too that, in pouring and refilling, the difficult concept of conservation of mass may begin to take shape. The right questions asked at the right time can stimulate concept formation. Estimating and measuring are a natural outcome of sand and water play.

The floors need to be protected from sand and water, and children can be taught to handle both materials with care. Plastic or rubber toys should be chosen for the sandbox because metal toys rust and are hard to clean. A broom, dustpan, and mop are needed so children can clean this area after play.

Water has many interesting properties for children to explore: it flows and generates force to move things; it can be evaporated, boiled, and changed into ice; it takes the shape of any area in which it is confined; it can be siphoned and can be sucked through a straw. The fluidity of water offers many possibilities for imaginative play. Concepts of size, weight, pressure, shape, and displacement can begin to form as the child experiments with water.

Waterplay demands no special skills and usually, there are no specific goals to be achieved. Playing with water or sand usually provides situations which are anxiety-free and makes possible the release of tensions.

Activities

. Hold sand and feel the mass change as it slips between fingers.
. Use damp sand to leave prints of hand, feet, toys, cookie cutters.
. Use a sifter, measuring spoons, and measuring cups.
. Write in the sand using fingers.
. Weigh dry sand and weigh the same volume of wet sand.
. Use measuring cups, spoons and funnels.
. Control sand so that tunnels, roads and bridges can be built.
. Use shovels and wooden spoons as extensions of hands.
. Bathe dolls and wash clothes.
. Use water and big brushes to "paint" boards, wagons, sidewalks.
. Add detergent and blow bubbles.
. Change color of water by adding tempera paint or food color in small quantities. Blue followed by yellow turns to green. Blue plastic bottles in yellow water look green.
. Look at reflections in water.
. Siphon colored water by means of a clear plastic tube.

Dress-Up Centre

This centre provides:

. an opportunity for a child to act out various roles;
. an activity which helps to relieve tensions and release pent-up emotions;
. an opportunity to use language;

. an opportunity to exercise imagination and legitimately include imaginary friends;
. a temporary and healthy escape from reality;
. a forum for problem solving;
. opportunities for creative and divergent thinking;
. opportunities for cooperative planning and communication.

At work in the activity centre.

Materials

. clothing rack or trunk
. clothing - hats, boots, uniforms, badges, wigs or masks
. screens to enclose the play area
. signs
. blankets, shawls
. music or noise-makers
. puppets and theatre
. sturdy box or bench
. play money, cash register
. empty cans
. clip-on hair rollers
. simple household tools
. materials from other centres as required

Activities

. Role playing, e.g., playing store, hospital, police station
. Pretending stories
. Interpretive dancing

Library and Listening Centre

Develop a secluded, comfortable spot where children can browse among pictures, picture books, fold-out books, and easy-to-read books. Sharing and talking should be encouraged. This is the place for records, record player, tape recorders and cassettes, and viewers. If an aide, volunteer, or visiting storyteller is available, that person should be ready to read the stories or poems the children ask for. He or she can help children who are trying to read by telling them the sounds or words they ask for.

When several copies of an easy-to-read book are available, those children who are very eager to learn to read will enjoy following along on each page as it is read to them. Children enjoy hearing a story several times, especially if it is well read. Occasionally, a kindergarten child can read well enough to entertain small groups of classmates. Others may be able to tell familiar stories to themselves on tape.

If a listening station or tape recorder is available, the teacher can record favorite stories and books. If signals are used to indicate that a page is to be turned, the child can follow along and enjoy the illustrations. When headsets are provided, children can listen, oblivious to the noises in the room.

See the bibliography at the end of this chapter for a list of books with ready-made cassettes.

Science and Social Studies Activity Centres

These centres should be developed as the need arises. See the Social Studies and Science sections under Suggestions for Group Activities in this chapter, pages 73-76.

The activities which go on in these centres will depend very largely on the interests which children have demonstrated by the things they bring to school, the questions they ask, and the discussions which have developed in some of the large group activities.

On occasion a particular child's interest may be served by placing books and other materials in the centre and pointing out that this activity is available.

Example 1: To Develop the Concept of Density

Use several identical containers; margarine tubs with lids are good for this. Set up the scale for 200 grams. The child pours sand into the container until the balance indicates 200 grams (including tub). Using a different container for each, the child then places water, rice, and playdough into containers until each weighs 200 grams (including tub). The children then arrange the containers in order beginning with the one that contains the least by volume. Number and name the lids of containers. Set aside and discuss later with a large group.

Does each tub weigh the same? Which tub is nearly full? Which tub is closest to being empty? Which container appears to have the most in it? Which container has the least?

This activity provides an introduction to the concept of density; some children may also begin to appreciate a standard measure. At this stage, it is best not to try to get the children to put their discoveries into words. However, the teacher should use the term density and encourage children to suggest other materials that might have high density.

At another time children could fill a standard measuring cup with sand, flour, rice, water, and weigh each and arrange the cups in order starting with the heaviest.

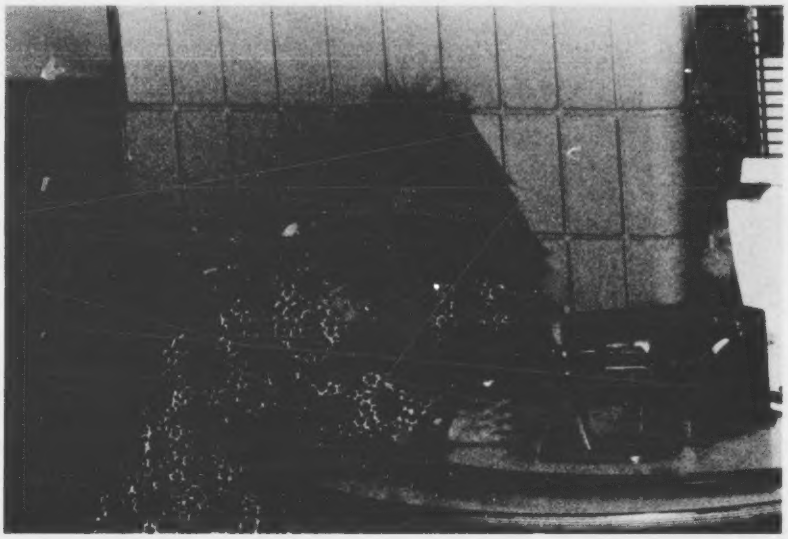
Example 2: Air Pressure

- Force an upside down glass into a bowl of water. The glass does not fill.
- Place a crumpled paper towel into the bottom of the glass. Turn the glass upside down and force it into a bowl of water. Why does the paper towel stay dry?
- Make rain by placing a cold pie plate in steam.
- Watch a balloon or an inner tube increase in size.
- Simulate thunder by blowing up two paper bags and banging them together.
- Make sparks jump to simulate lightning.
- Keep frogs' eggs or toads' eggs to the tadpole stage or longer.
- Set up a chemical garden.
- Keep a chart of personal growth.
- Measure temperature inside and outside of a snow house.
- Observe life in an aquarium or terrarium.
- Look at outdoor ant hills or obtain an ant farm.
- Plant seeds.

The Kindergarten section of the Manitoba Department of Education Science K-6, 1979 curriculum guide includes numerous ideas for activities.

Equipment

- Things to feel, smell, hear and observe. Children can identify sourness, sweetness, saltiness, and bitterness by tasting such things as oranges, grapefruits, various jellies, salted and unsalted peanuts, yogurt, dates, and raisins. Any testing activities should take place under adult supervision.
- Materials suggested for science activities listed in this section.
- The materials used in the Manipulative-perceptual centre.
- Seeds and things that grow.
- Rock and shell displays.
- Animal pets.
- Books.
- Objects of interest brought by children.



Children enjoy active investigation.

A Manitoba Example of a Social Studies Oriented Activity

When there are several Native students in the class, the teacher can show the children how to make bannock. Bannock was originally a Scottish dish brought to Manitoba by the Red River Settlers. The Native people recognized that it was a food appropriate for their lifestyle and learned to make it.

If there is no oven in the school, a counter-top broiler will suffice. Butter and jam add to the taste. All the children will enjoy the smell of the bannock. As it cooks, the class can plan to make Irish Soda Bread and discuss how it resembles bannock.

Chippewa bannock[1] - from Brochet

4 cups flour
1/3 cup soft lard
2 teaspoons salt
3-4 tablespoons baking powder
1 1/2 cups warm water

Mix dry ingredients together. Rub in lard. Make a hole in centre. Add water and knead a bit. Grease cookie sheet or oblong pan. Pat dough into 1 1/2 - 2" thickness. Poke holes in top with fork. Bake 25-30 minutes at 450°. Berries in season or raisins may be added.

Cree bannock - from Grand Rapids

3 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 - 1 1/2 cups warm water
3-4 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 cup melted lard

Cook as for Chippewa bannock.

Irish soda bread

2 cups whole wheat flour
2 cups white flour
2 cups sour milk or buttermilk
1 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
2 tablespoons soft butter

Sift flour, salt, and baking soda. Rub in butter. Stir in milk. Turn onto floured board and knead lightly. Shape into 2 loaves. Place in floured loaf pans. Bake at 370° for 45 minutes.

Other traditional foods can be made on special occasions - fried rice, chili, lasagna, maple sugar.

Field trips can produce artifacts and materials which can be built into a social studies display.

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[1] These recipes and those which follow later in this chapter are given in Imperial measurements. In addition, all temperatures are given in Fahrenheit. The Canadian Home Economics Association does not recommend that the conversion to metric measurements be done because of the inaccuracies that may result. Teachers are advised to refer to the Association's publication, A Collage of Canadian Cooking (1979) where many metric recipes can be found.

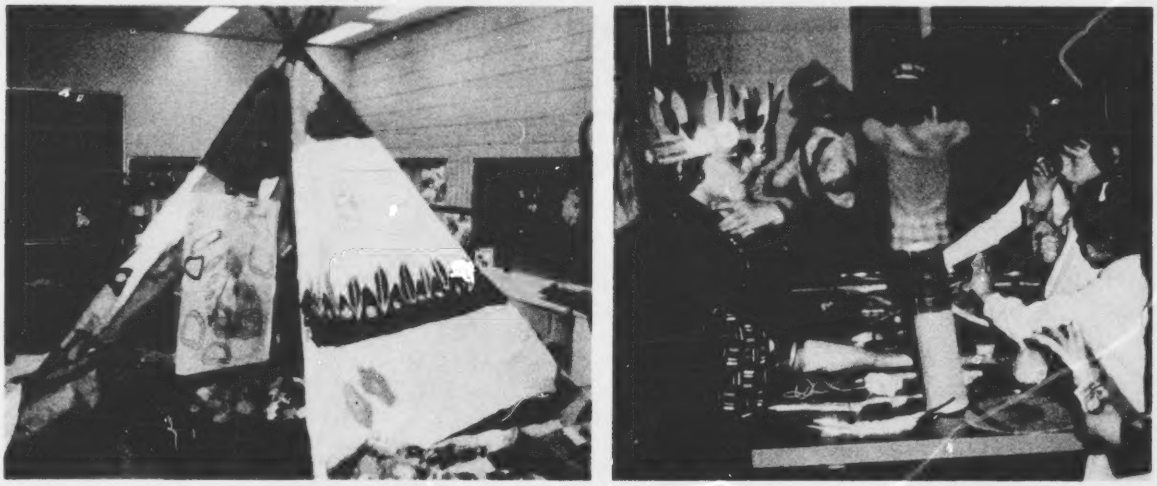
A Project to Promote Understanding of Self and of Others

Two preschool teachers were troubled because a small group of children was unwilling to acknowledge their heritage and was actively avoiding making any contribution to discussions that included Native children. In addition, these children made prejudicial remarks about Native people.

The teachers met with band leaders, social workers, and the parents of the children. All agreed to a program that would expose the entire kindergarten class to Native culture and accomplishments. Wednesdays became Native Days and a special visitor was invited each week. Among the visitors were:

- a Native woman who was a social worker on a Sioux reserve. She brought Indian artifacts, taught songs and played Indian games;
- a Native grandmother who talked about the old days, Native medicine, and customs. She carried on conversations with the Sioux children and interpreted for the rest of the class;
- a university professor in Education who knew that two grade three classrooms were doing a project about Native people. On several occasions she brought three children at a time from the project group to the kindergarten. The visiting children talked in sign language which they explained to the young children. They wore the clothes and head-dresses that they had made and demonstrated owner's sticks and talking sticks. Each group of visitors brought Indian artifacts to show and, in return, the kindergarten children allowed the grade three class to use the ceremonial robes which the social worker had brought to the kindergarten. The grade three students played Indian games with the kindergarten children and told legends. The university professor helped the kindergarten children make bannock which they ate with chokecherry jelly. This was repeated for the grade three classes;
- the Executive Director of a social service agency who had been made an honorary member of the Sioux Band and had been given a large model of a Sioux teepee. She set up the teepee and the kindergarten children enjoyed playing with it; in addition, they were helped to make and decorate paper teepees which they could take home. Later, they visited the grade three classroom and played in the full-sized furnished teepee which had been constructed by children and parents working together.

Cooperation between the grade three and kindergarten class was maintained and they shared resources and ideas. In May, the grade three classes put on a very fine day-long presentation of their project in the school gymnasium. In a dozen or more centres they displayed Indian cooking, tools, games, legends, medicine, clothing, etc. and danced ceremonial dances and played games. Every child was in Native dress and the gymnasium walls displayed work done during the project. The visitors, including the preschoolers, were invited to join the dances and games.



Children learn about Native culture by participating in a "Native Days" social studies project.

The white children learned about another culture and came to respect their Native friends and the project helped the Native children to feel important and proud.

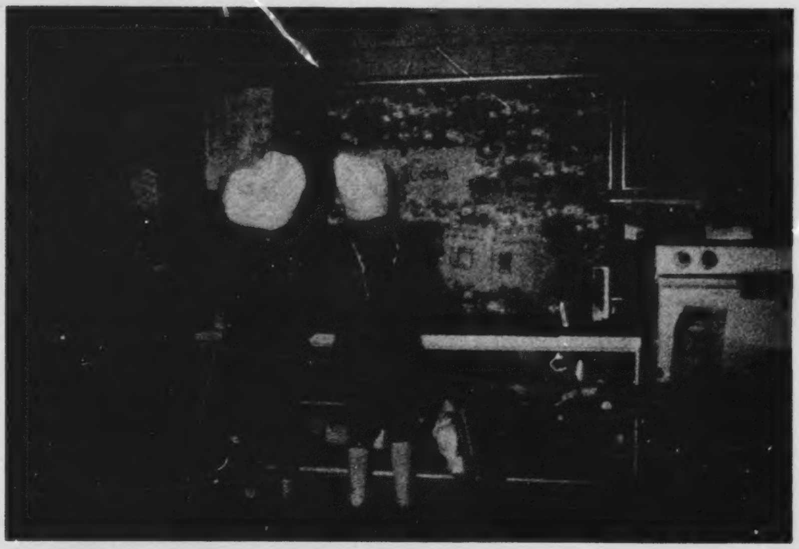
Cooking Centre

Purposes

- Affords opportunities for children to feel important because they are engaging in "adult" activities.
- Provides a feeling of accomplishment when the products are satisfying and praiseworthy.
- Provides opportunities for social and language growth.
- Provides opportunities for encouraging cognitive growth and makes children aware of the need to be able to read words and numbers and to measure.
- Encourages role-playing.
- Provides a forum for the discussion of favorite foods of other ethnic groups.
- Provides an opportunity to interpret stimulations of the senses of hearing, smelling, and touching.
- Enables children to practice manual dexterity when they beat, pour, grate, and knead.
- Enables children to practice following directions.
- Provides opportunities for consumer education.
- Presents opportunities to teach good eating and cleanliness habits. (If children use whole grain flours, seeds, honey, wheat germ, molasses and dried fruits in their cooking, they learn to enjoy healthful foods. Sugar rich and "gooey food" recipes should not be used.)

Suggestions for the Smooth, Safe Operation of the Cooking Centre

- Limit the number of children involved until all have learned how to use the centre.
- Check all children's folders to learn about any food allergies they may have. Post a list of these in the centre whenever it is in operation.
- In the early stages of operation, measure out the ingredients and provide the children with only the exact amounts of each item needed for the project. Later, children can have access to larger supplies and do their own measuring.
- Emphasize that clean-up is part of the cooking activity.
- Provide unbreakable equipment, child-height work areas, and blunt knives.
- Supervise cooking carefully. Many teachers do the actual cooking on a portable hot plate, oven-broiler or electric Dutch oven themselves and the children gather around to watch the process. Others make arrangements with the Home Economics classes to have the baking done in the kitchens there.
- Provide the recipe in the form of action picture cards. The children follow the left to right sequence doing what the picture tells them to do, e.g., cinnamon toast:
  - put the bread in the toaster,
  - push the lever that brings the bread down into the toaster,
  - the bread pops up,
  - butter the toast,
  - sprinkle it with cinnamon,
  - eat it,
  - clean up.



Action picture cards provide the instructions for the recipe.

- Before the first cooking session:
  - shop for the staple goods such as flour, brown and white sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salad oil, margarine, salt, several spices, powdered milk, raisins, and all other ingredients needed for each specific activity;
  - display the groceries and discuss them with the children. See how many they recognize;
  - print words on large charts: salt, flour, etc., for names of ingredients. See if the children can match any of them;
  - if desired, draw and correctly color pictures of containers for each ingredient - 10 to 15 cm high. Make pictures of the measuring utensils with amounts printed on. These pictures can be used in other activity centres;
  - print each recipe on large chart paper;
  - assemble the bowls, utensils, and ingredients necessary for each recipe and arrange them on a supply table. Mark out the work-table space. Make arrangements for the dish washing and drying.

Timers that signal when cooking time is up are very useful. Children seem to be fascinated with sand clocks (egg timers). If necessary the timer can be turned over several times.

Basic biscuits

Each recipe makes 12 biscuits. Double or triple as required.

1 3/4 cups flour 3 teaspoons baking powder 1 teaspoon salt	A
1/4 cup shortening	B
3/4 cup milk	C

Method:
1. Mix A together.
2. Cut in B.

3. Add C. Blend with fork until evenly moistened.
4. Put dough on floured surface. Round up. Knead 20 times. Roll to 1/2" thick. Cut into shapes. Bake 8-10 minutes at 450° on ungreased sheets.

Biscuit variations

1. Cheese Biscuits:
   Add 3/4 cup grated cheese after cutting in shortening.

2. Raisin Biscuits:
   Add 3 to 4 tablespoons sugar to A. Then add 3/4 cup raisins.
   (Optional: add 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon to A.)

3. Fruit Biscuits:
   Add to A - 2 tablespoons sugar
   - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
   - 3/4 cup cut mixed peel

4. Quick Cinnamon Buns:
   After rolling out dough, butter it lavishly, cover with brown sugar, sprinkle with cinnamon, dot with raisins. (Optional: chopped nuts or coconut.) Roll into log. Cut slices 3/4 inch thick. Lay on greased sheets or in muffin tins. Bake 12 to 15 minutes at 400°.

Muffins

Do not over mix the batter; it should be lumpy. These muffins can also be made into coffee cakes.

Molasses bran muffins (1 dozen large)

1 cup whole bran cereal 1/2 cup milk 1/2 cup molasses	A
1 cup flour 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder 1 teaspoon baking soda 1 teaspoon salt	B
1/2 cup raisins or chopped dates (or figs)	
1/3 cup salad oil 1 egg	C

Method:
1. Combine A. Let stand.
2. Combine B. Add raisins. Mix.
3. Add C to A. Beat well.
4. Add A & C to B. Stir till moistened.
5. Grease muffin cups. Fill 2/3 full.
6. Bake 20 minutes at 400°.

Pumpkin crunch muffins (1 dozen large)

1 3/4 cups flour	A
1/4 cup sugar	
3 teaspoons baking powder	
1/2 teaspoon salt	
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon	
1/4 teaspoon cloves	
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg	

1/2 cup raisins

2/3 cup milk	B
1/2 cup cooked, mashed pumpkin	
1/3 cup salad oil	
1 egg	

2/3 cup brown sugar	C
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon	

Method:
1. Combine A. Add raisins.
2. Combine B. Beat with rotary beater.
3. Add B to A. Stir till moistened.
4. Mix C.
5. Fill well greased muffin tins 2/3 full. Sprinkle tops with C.
6. Bake 20 to 25 minutes at 400°.

Wheat germ muffins

1 1/2 cups flour	A
1/4 cup brown sugar	
3 teaspoons baking powder	
1/2 teaspoon salt	

2/3 cup wheat germ	B
1/2 cup raisins	

1 cup milk	C
1 egg	
2 tablespoons melted butter, cooled	

Method:
1. Combine A. Mix.
2. Add B to A. Mix.
3. Combine C. Beat with rotary beater.
4. Add C to AB. Stir till moistened.
5. Fill greased muffin cups 2/3 full.
6. Bake 20 minutes at 400°.

Banana-nut muffins

1 3/4 cups flour
1/3 cup sugar
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

A

1/2 cup chopped nuts

1 cup mashed ripe banana (about three)
1/3 cup salad oil
1/4 cup milk
1 egg
2 teaspoons lemon juice

B

Method:
1. Combine A. Mix. Add nuts.
2. Combine B. Mix slightly with beater.
3. Add B to A. Stir till moistened.
4. Fill well greased cups 2/3 full.
5. Bake 20 to 25 minutes at 400°.

Health candy

1 cup dry cereal
1 cup sunflower seeds (shelled)
1 cup soaked figs
1 cup soaked raisins
1 cup soaked prunes
1 cup soaked dates

Stem the figs and pit the dates and prunes. Chop the mixture together and add honey if the mixture is too dry. Shape into balls and roll in cereal crumbs.

Health drink

2 cups milk
1/2 cup sunflower seeds (shelled)
1 or 2 bananas

Blend well in blender and drink slowly. More baranas can be added. If you like, one raw egg can be added.

Applesauce oatmeal cookies (4 1/2 dozen)

1 3/4 cups flour	A
1/2 teaspoon salt	
1 teaspoon cinnamon	
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg	
1/2 teaspoon cloves	
3/4 cup sugar	B
1/2 cup shortening	
1 egg	
1 cup canned applesauce	C
1 teaspoon soda	
1 cup raisins	D
1 cup rolled oats	

Method:

1. Combine A. Mix.
2. Cream B together thoroughly.
3. Combine C. Add to B some of C, then A, then C, then A. Mix.
4. Stir in D, till moistened.
5. Drop by teaspoonfuls, 2" apart on greased baking sheet.
6. Bake at 350° for 18 to 20 minutes.

Pudding

Use baby food jars and place 2 teaspoons instant pudding mix and 6 teaspoons milk in each jar and mix.

Pumpkin cake

1 1/4 cups flour	A
1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder	
1/4 teaspoon soda	
1/2 teaspoon salt	
1/2 teaspoon ginger	
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon	
1/4 teaspoon cloves	
1/4 cup butter, margarine, or shortening	B
1/2 cup sugar, white	
1/2 cup packed brown sugar	
1 egg	
1/2 teaspoon vanilla	

1/2 cup mashed cooked pumpkin
1/4 cup milk
1/2 cup chopped walnuts

Method:
1. Grease and flour a 8" square pan.
2. Combine A. Mix.
3. Cream B well. Add pumpkin. Mix.
4. Add A to B, alternately with milk. Mix well after each, but don't beat.
5. Stir in nuts.
6. Put batter in pan. Level it.
7. Bake 40 to 45 minutes at 350°.

Other suggestions

- Make a fruit jelly using a cup of boiling water and a cup of crushed ice.
- Prepare soup for lunch with
- Make butter
- Prepare hot chocolate.
- Make bannock, page
- Make pancakes. Cook for Pancake Tuesday.
- Pop corn (can be used for Christmas decorations).
- Peel apples and make applesauce. Use Hallowe'en apples.
- Boil eggs. Use a timer. Hard boiled eggs can be decorated for Easter.
- Make icing for Valentine cookies.
- Boil macaroni and add grated cheese and canned tomatoes.

Art Centre

> Experience precedes instruction - Rousseau
> Knowledge begins in experience and not in words - Pestalozzi
> Experience becomes more meaningful, however, when the child can put this experience into words.

Children should be encouraged to use a variety of tools to make marks. Besides crayons and pencils they should use water-based felt pens, brushes, pastels, chalk, charcoal, and bits of sponge. Nails can be used for drawing and patterning on wet sand in sand-trays and for wax relief or print making; nearly all children love to use pieces of blackboard and magic slates. Patterns of lines should be observed or invented. Children enjoy scribbling or painting patterns that use dots, zig-zags, circles, stars, stripes, checks, plaids, and spirals.

Painting

Often parents have been unwilling to allow painting at home because of the "mess" and children come to school already tense about the accidents that can happen. Teachers should do everything possible to reduce this tension and not be overly concerned about any "mess" that results from art activities. Children should be taught to take some responsibility for cleaning up. Newspapers placed on the tables and floor reduce tension when children know that the papers can be gathered up and disposed of when paint has been spilled. Painting smocks also reduce the anxiety children might have about their clothes.

Until the child is able to print his or her name on a picture, the teacher should do it if asked and should also be prepared to write any name or story if specifically requested.

There is considerable controversy over whether or not children should be asked to explain or interpret their art work. Some critics feel that asking for an explanation forces children not only to defend their work, but also to assign meaning where perhaps no meaning was intended. What the child does may, in fact, be only playful mark-making or experimentation with media; on the other hand, it may be a visual representation of what the world is perceived to be. Once again, it should be stressed that children's art should not be judged by adult standards but rather should be seen as a development of images.

Materials

- large sheets of drawing paper or newsprint (45 cm x 60 cm or larger)
- large stiff brushes
- powder or cakes of tempera paint
- large cans or bottles with lids to mix larger quantities of paint
- baby food tins for smaller amount of paint for each child
- foil plates for pallets if dry paint is used
- painting smocks (usually an old long sleeved shirt worn backwards)
- sponges, mop and pail for spills
- water
- protection such as newsprint or plastic for floor
- easel or clothes line with pins for drying space
- rings cut from paper rolls or sections of milk cartons. Roll picture up and slip ring around. The picture gets home safely.
- variety of scrap materials (wallpaper, cloth, string, wood scraps, buttons, etc.)

Finger or hand painting

- Protect tables if necessary.
- Prepare "wash-up" facilities in advance.
- Wear old clothes, preferably short sleeves.
- Start with one color of finger paint only, but later allow the use and blending of two or more colors.
- Teach children to use the whole hand, the ball of the thumb, closed fingers, and the palm of the hand.
- Produce unusual designs using sponges.
- Expect each child to use 4 to 5 pieces of paper.
- Allow plenty of cleaning up time (usually done towards the end of the day so paintings can lie flat and dry overnight without having to be moved).

See the finger paint recipe, page 42 in the Art K-6 curriculum guide.

Sand painting

Add paint powder to sand (1 part powder to 4 parts sand). Place in large shakers which can be made from tins with good lids. Puncture lids and secure them to can with masking tape when colored sand has been placed inside. Shake colored sand onto paper that has been covered with paste or on paper on which a design in glue has been made.

Soap painting

Place a small quantity of soap powder on a saucer. Add powdered paint and enough water to make a painting medium. Apply with brushes or fingers. Have paper towels available.

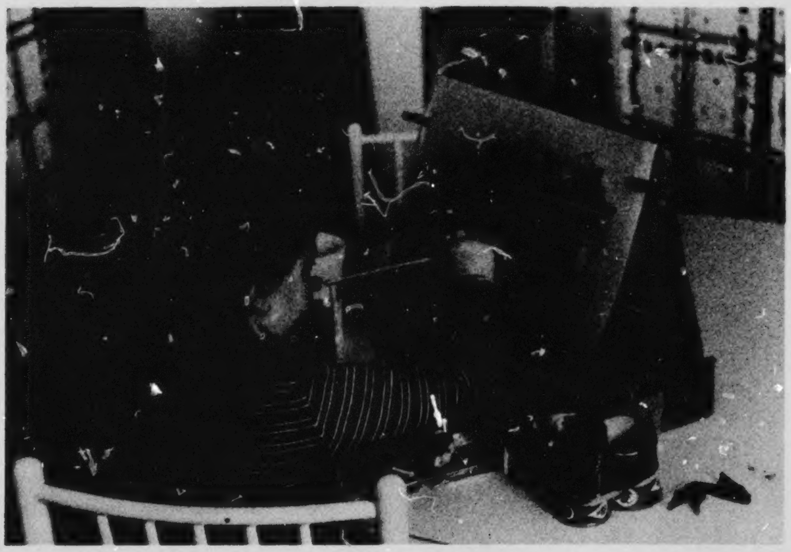
Table-Top Easels Conserve Space

Cut down a box approximately 45 cm x 23 cm to make a tray with shallow sides (5 cm maximum). Join two 45 cm x 60 cm pieces of strong cardboard across the upper end using masking tape. (Corrugated cardboard will do nicely for the easel.) Stand these two pieces of cardboard in an up-side-down V-shape in the tray, pressing the edges against the sides of the tray for support.

Tape or clip the painting paper to these two surfaces so that two children can work on the one easel or so the child using the easel can make two pictures if he or she wishes. Use the remaining tray space to accommodate paint and brushes between the uprights. Use dry or mixed paint. Three baby food tins held together with an elastic band are excellent for paint pots. The water container, if used, should be low, firm, and wide-based.

This easel can be folded for storage. In the photograph, the child is using dry paint. She mixes her own colors on her palette, a T. V. dinner plate. Spare easels make good drying racks for pictures which are still wet. Every child's picture should be displayed but sent home while the child is still interested in it. The core or rolls of wax paper or Christmas wrapping paper are excellent as protectors for pictures on their homeward journey.

Teachers are referred to Suggested Subjects or Themes for Children's Art Projects in Emphasis Art for additional ideas.



A table-top easel.

Variations of Painting Surfaces and Utensils

Children should not always paint on newsprint or drawing paper. They should be exposed to other textures such as newspaper, corrugated paper, rocks, glass, wood, wallpaper, and cardboard. The painting surface can be raised using toilet-paper tubes, blocks of wood, and other scrap material. Children enjoy using paint or crayons on stretched cloth. In addition to a variety of surfaces, a variety of utensils (sticks, fingers, cardboard, cups, spoons, etc.) should be used.

Printmaking

This activity lends itself to centres once children have learned the techniques.

Materials

Among the materials suggested for use are:

. rubber stamps,
. fruit and vegetables (cut in half),
. dull knives for cutting,
. sponges,
. a box of oddments such as pieces of wood, styrofoam, fabrics, forks, corks, nuts and bolts,
. centres from toilet rolls, cylinder shapes,
. shallow trays for dipping,
. water base printer's ink,
. powder paint plus liquid starch or white glue,
. clean up clothes, sponges, and pails.

This two-dimensional activity could serve as an introduction to three-dimensional activities; for example, building up and printing a raised surface composed of "found" objects, could lead directly into sculpture.

Clay

The child's early experiences with clay will usually be manipulative only (pinching, squeezing, rolling, impressing, pounding). Later, some of these discoveries will be resolved into the making of a form. As in the case with other media, this form may not necessarily be a realistic representation.

There is joy in creating shapes, destroying them and recreating the old or making a new shape. This is a repetitive process which helps children clarify visual images. Playdough, as well as clay, plasticine, sand, and mud are media which lend themselves to this activity. The child may show little or no interest in keeping a creation once completed. What the child has enjoyed is the feel of the materials, the sense of control over the material, and the freedom to discard the product and start again.

Children enjoy making their own playdough. They can do this if a pictorial recipe is printed on chart paper and hung in the art centre. Teachers observe that children who have made their own playdough are likely to be more responsible in using it and storing it. In addition, as children make the dough and manipulate it they talk about it, thereby extending their language experience and developing their sensitivity to sensori stimuli. Finger muscles get useful exercise as children knead, roll, pummel, and punch the dough.

Skills Developed Through Art Activities

Many activities such as drawing, painting, modelling, cutting, and pasting involve the coordination of hand and eye movement and the development of the smaller muscles. All these activities lay a foundation for the fundamentals of handwriting without a long series of preparatory exercises on strokes and movement. The growth in coordination which comes through satisfying art activities is often more lasting than that developed from exercises designed specifically to aid coordination development.

Do not ask the children to stay within lines at a time in their development when they may not have control over their hands. Coloring books and stencils, because they offer outlined and predetermined form, restrict a child's imagination and stifle creativity.

Some art activities may take place in specially scheduled times with the class working together as a whole or in several smaller groups. Children need to be encouraged to work together, to share ideas, materials and experiences. Children's art can frequently be correlated with other activities. Help from volunteers or aides becomes almost a necessity when all children are involved in art activities at the same time.

Children may continue to draw and paint using lines and such symbols as the circle, rectangle, triangle, and oval but will begin to attach these symbols to objects in their environment. Teachers can help children by discussing how the circle or other geometric figures could be developed. Children might suggest the sun, a head, and a flower but some may suggest clocks, teapots, tables, and Peter Pumpkin Eater's house.

When children begin to combine various symbols, this should be noted and encouraged. Children also experiment with a variety of ways of representing trees, houses, and people; when they find a symbol they enjoy making, they repeat it over and over again.

Most kindergarten children represent the sky by using a band of blue at the top of the page. Most pictures have the sun in a top corner. Eyes are usually high in the head, and hands and feet become prominent. There is no need to try to influence the size or position of the things young children draw.

Making images in the art centre.

Children's art is a joy to the child and to the adult who knows how to appreciate it. Give young children materials and opportunities to explore all art media and talk with them about their creations if they want to.

Centres Designed to Develop Academic Preliminaries: Language-Activity and Learning Centre

Developing good oral language skills is one of the most important tasks for the preschool child. Talking, questioning, drawing conclusions, and making inferences should be part of the learning occurring in every activity centre and of every activity of the day. Children should be improving their listening ability, learning to follow directions, becoming curious about the written word, and feeling the need to write things for themselves. Language and thinking are closely related and the astute teacher will take advantage of opportunities to encourage children to do their own thinking and to express their own thoughts.

Because language pervades the program, it may appear unnecessary to develop a language centre. However, it does seem wise to have a centre where there is concentration on language development.

Purposes

The language centre provides an area where the child is able to:

- learn skills in small group discussions, e.g., learns to respect opinions of others;
- engage in pre-reading activities with books and pictures;
- develop skills in story telling, questioning, giving directions, explaining to others;
- engage in listening activities;
- become aware of the relationship between sound and symbol;
- find the materials needed for signs and labels;
- use this centre, if there is no special library corner, to browse among pictures and books. The child who is beginning to read independently can read to a small group or to individuals; the child who is reading occasionally needs an audience;
- match sound and symbol cards;
- play with personal word-rings. Groups of children often enjoy making sentences to read to each other;
- create a personal journal or "Book About Me."

  My Father.
  My Mother.
  My Family.
  My Toys.
  My Coloring Books.
  My Feel Book.
  My Smell Book.
  My Own Art Book.

Materials

Most of the books that the teacher has read to the children should be placed in this centre. Children may enjoy "pretending to read them" by using the pictures to recall the story. They may also present them to an adult for re-reading.

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1. A revised language arts guide is being developed. This guide will give much more detail in the area of language development and should be used in addition to the suggestions made here.

- picture books
- easy to read books
- alphabet books
- pre-primer type books
- listening station - tape recorder, record player, radio
- sound-symbol kit
- pencils, crayons, paper, felt pens
- stapler, loose leaf rings, punch
- sheets with the names of objects already printed on them
- puppets (possibly a box for theatre)
- envelopes with picture cards that can be arranged in a sequence to tell of an event or story

Access to:

- flannel board, magnetic board;
- film strips as needed. Film strips which have been shown to the class, especially those with simple captions, should be available for viewing again in situations where children can handle equipment;
- magazines to cut;
- fabric scraps;
- materials from art centre as needed.

Activities

These activities are planned largely for the Stage B child. It is anticipated that this centre will not be used in the early months of the kindergarten year and could serve as a library centre until the children are ready for the activities suggested here.

1. Prepare tapes so that children can look at small books and hear the story at the same time. Repeating each page of the book or the whole story several times on the same tape adds to the child's enjoyment if the child is reaching out to learn to read. Children who are more concerned with listening pleasure prefer a normal taping.

   Teachers are referred to the Bibliography of this chapter for sources of stories. See especially A Motivational Language Program for Prekindergarten and story teller's records.

2. Tape rhymes and nonsense poems

   - Peter Piper
   - Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary
   - There Was a Fine Farmer, Who Had a Gray Mare, Lumpity-lumpity, lump
   - Pease Porridge Hot
   - Boys' Boots are Big
   - I Had a Little Pony
   - Wee Willie Winkie
   - I Wake in the Morning Early
   - Whisky, Frisky
   - This is the Way the Ladies Ride
   - Pat-a-Cake
   - Jack Be Nimble
   - One, Two, Buckle My Shoe
   - Sneezes
   - Pussy-Cat, Pussy-Cat
   - Jonathan Gee
   - Little Johnny Head in Air

3. Use ancillary material from a variety of reading series; the pictures, cards, and guidebooks often give excellent suggestions for pre-reading. Worksheets are not recommended.
4. Provide a model for children who want to learn to print their names. The children can try printing or can decorate the model only and take it home to label their own possessions. Small chalkboards can be used for practice.
5. Tape such stories as "Chicken Licken" but leave parts of each name blank so child who is listening can supply the name.
   Tape: Chicken L __________, Henry P __________,
   Turkey L __________.
   The child who reads along may acquire the technique of consonant substitution.
6. Tell well known stories and expect children to supply words, given the initial consonant. The third little pig built its house of b_____ or s_____.

Children can participate in story telling.

7. Use sentences that are not well known and see if children can provide the missing word, given the initial consonant. The dog b_____. The dog h_____. The dog y_____. The woman baked a c_____.

8. Illustrate the story on separate pages and staple them together to make a book. The children will have to ask what each page says and the teacher should be prepared to write individual pages as required. A cover can be provided. Suggestions for pages:

   . Me,
   . My mother and me,
   . My family,
   . I am playing house,
   . My friends,
   . Mother working,
   . I am walking,
   . Father washing the car,
   . I am running,
   . I am at school,
   . Skating,
   . Christmas.

9. Word rings (Sylvia Ashton Warner style)
   When children begin to ask for their own set of known sight words, the teacher can provide cards on which the words are printed as the child suggests them, as well as a loose leaf ring to hold the cards together. The child's name is on the covering card and the cards are hung by the ring when not in use. As the ring becomes full, it may be well to group the words using a number of rings in terms of action words, names of things or people, or service words. Children who like this game usually inveigle an adult into playing with them by grouping their words into sentences,
   e.g., Carolyn likes apples
   Carolyn likes ice cream
   Carolyn found a chicken
   She found a chicken
   She found a little chicken
   Carolyn and Darcy found a little apple.
   Two or three advanced children can play this game together thereby learning new words. The teachers must not judge the words and cause competition to enter the game.
10. Provide film strips with captions. These must be school property and not expensive to replace. Children must learn to handle the strip projector carefully before they can be allowed to use it. Older children can help manage the film strip projector.
11. Old slides can be used with viewers. The pictures can be sorted into any given category: people, children, animals, things that can be eaten, things that fly. Vary the category from day to day.
12. Use picture card kits:
   . find group pictures of things that rhyme;
   . play "Fish";
   . find groups of pictures that start with the same consonant.
13. Have children draw a page of items that begin with a given consonant sound.
14. Have children complete sequence cards of charts by drawing or by arranging manipulative material to match the patterns given.
15. Match and sort using commercial games and sets.
16. Use material to bring out likenesses and differences starting with very obvious differences and working toward sharpening visual perception skills.
17. Use exercises that require completion of a drawing of a person or object.
18. Use visual perception cards graded as to difficulty.
19. Develop tasks requiring visual motor coordination, e.g., drawing along paths, mazes, etc.
20. Match pictures of things which are identical except for their position in space.
21. Draw pictures of a farmer, a baby, a child, a dog. On a piece of cardboard, down one side, make a hole by each picture and attach a lace to the hole. On the opposite side draw objects that might belong to people, etc. in the first list, e.g., tractor, bone, rattle, toy wagon. Place holes near these pictures. Children can use lace for the man and place it through the hole by tractor to show that there is a relationship.
22. Use clothespins to show relationships. Use pictures of people; on a clothespin, tape something related to only one person pictured. Children clip clothespins on the correct card. Besides showing relationships, this task develops finger strength.
23. Provide templates of simple shapes to improve hand strength and to give practice in left to right movement. Have children trace around them in a clockwise direction; later let the child reproduce shape by just looking at the template. Tracing shapes on an overhead projection film appeals to youngsters.
24. For children who want to print, supply models of letters with signs to show where to begin and arrows to show how to progress. The flock letters that come with some reading series are excellent for this.
25. Join dots in a straight line from left to right as a good pre-writing activity.

26. Place or draw a picture of an animal on the left hand side of the paper. The child draws many lines to the right of the paper to show possible paths for the animal to walk, and also draw dots for it to jump.
27. Use cut out animals or people and let children move them along given paths, left to right. These paths may be made with colored, self-sticking dots or felt pens on large pieces of paper.
28. Use slates made from cut up pieces of blackboard. Place a green dot at the upper left hand corner. The child draws lines, etc., from left to right.
29. The Peabody Language Development Kits provide excellent suggestions for language development.

Mathematics Learning Centre

Even after this centre is set up, teachers should continue to take advantage of the many opportunities for counting which occur daily in the kindergarten such as rote counting taught through songs and games and counting turns, children, pieces of equipment. The meaning of counting will become more clear as children develop an understanding of the one-to-one correspondence between numbers and objects in a group.

An understanding of the difference between ordinal and cardinal numbers should develop incidentally as children find themselves being first, second, and third in turns for activities.

Children should have practical experience of what number comes before and what number comes next, e.g., five children sitting on chairs in a row are given consecutive numbers. The third child is encouraged to say "I am three so you (pointing), must be two and you (pointing), must be four."

See: Mathematics K-6, Province of Manitoba, Department of Education, 1978.

Purposes

Through activities in the mathematics centre, the child will:

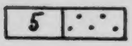
- learn some or all of the number symbols (0-9);
- begin to measure things using metre sticks, litre jugs, cups, scales, as well as non-standard units such as hands, feet, thumbs, or tiles;
- begin to see the pattern in the number system;
- begin to use specific vocabulary: longer, shorter, taller; heavier, lighter; too much, too many; thin, thick; few, less; before, after, etc.;
- learn to recognize and name simple shapes such as △ ○ □ ▭
- categorize according to shape or number;
- begin to tell time;
- begin to form the concept of conservation of mass;
- make symmetrical designs;
- place objects in one-to-one correspondence;
- make and interpret simple graphs, e.g., to show attendance as up or down from yesterday, score in a game, birthdays by months.

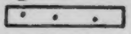
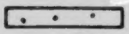
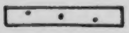
Materials

- measuring units: cups, spoons, tapes, rulers (metric), kitchen scales
- counting frames
- counters (in containers)

- tongue depressors
- checkers with magnets attached
- bingo chips
- bread tags
- beading frames
- small bean bags
- sand for measuring and pouring
- water and beakers
- clock
- egg timer
- magnetic board
- cuisenaire rods
- popsicle sticks
- attribute blocks
- geoboards and rubber bands
- dominoes
- cups and boxes
- hula hoops in various colors
- number line on floor or wall
- block design cards
- parquetry blocks
- play money
- pegs and peg boards
- beads, lima beans
- design cards for beading
- wooden sticks of various lengths
- boxes of shapes varying in size and color
- trays (styrofoam from meat and bakery counters)
- egg cartons
- unifex cubes
- unit blocks
- geometric shape puzzles
- calendar
- wooden cylinders (Montessori-type)
- anything that can be sorted
- containers to sort things into

Activities

- Free play with the materials. The teacher observes growth and directs the child to explore with suitable games, etc.
- Following design cards using parquetry blocks.
- Playing freely with or making patterns and "trains" with cuisenaire rods (e.g., make trains the exact size of the orange rod, etc.).
- Jigsaw puzzles involving number symbols and their semi-concrete representation. 

  Only the correct cards fit. Children must count but need not know the symbols.
- Matching from boxes of semi-concrete symbol cards.
  e.g.,  and  and 
  When number symbols are known, placing the correct numeral with each card
- Play dominoes.
- Matching according to total dots on dominoes.

- Playing with two paper plates, counters, and folded strips to represent the signs < and >. One child sets the problem and the other child places the sign correctly.
- Using tickets to supply missing symbols in counting strips.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
•	••	•••	••••	•••••	••••••	•••••••	••••••••	•••••••••

- Using balance scales.
- Filling containers with sand or water to bring out the idea of conservation of mass--containers have the same volume but different shapes.
- Making cookies from playdough and reshaping them into their original mass.
- Place sticks from boxes of 10 in various lengths in descending or ascending order of size. These boxes may have sets of sticks in which matching color also becomes part of the problem.
- Use shape boxes to match shapes, make patterns.
- Using attribute blocks for free play, for sorting for shape, size, and color and for playing the games given in the manual.
- Place beads on a wire to continue a set pattern.
- Make geometric shapes with simple Tangrams.
- Use packages of things ordered as to length, size, volume, etc. Have the child fit other things into the order (e.g., 10 sticks of various lengths arranged in order with two extra sticks to be fitted in).
- Cut styrofoam into various lengths or widths and have these arranged in order.
- Play Fish with commercial Fish cards.
- Spread 12 lima beans out into one line of 12, 2 lines of 6, 3 lines of 4, 4 lines of 3. Do we always have 12 beans? Pile them into a heap. Are there still 12?
- Pour water and sand from a tall measure into a shallow bowl and back again. This activity may contribute to the child's eventual grasp of conservation of matter.
- Make dominoes with gummed circles. Build trains with them by matching ends.
- Use the number board with pegs and washers. Children arrange pegs in order and place washers on pegs.
- Use balance scales to "weigh" and compare small objects.
- Play with a thermometer by watching the mercury go up or down when taken from inside to outside, from shade to sun. Beakers with water or varying temperatures can be used. Children who have built an igloo can take the temperature inside and outside.
- Practice putting geometric shapes through form boards or into sorting boxes.
- Use form boards and shape puzzles.
- Put items into categories according to: number, shape, thickness, color, and size (e.g., attribute blocks).
- Use hula hoops to contain sets of "yellow" objects, "circles", "triangles" or any other set that has been defined.
- Play with the kindergarten clock.
- Use templates to produce geometrical shapes.
- Use geoboards and elastic bands to make shapes that match the shapes given to them on cards.
- Put simple price tags on small articles or pictures and use play money, pennies, nickels, and dimes to match the price.
- Supply materials that may be cut in half.
- Play with paper dolls matching clothes that fit. Make piles of hats, dresses, and jackets.
- Build up a rocking toy.
- Make a pattern in the upper row of an egg carton using counters and have the child repeat this pattern in the lower row. Later have the pattern repeated in reverse order.
- Organize a popcorn sale at 10¢ a bag. Children work with nickels, dimes, and pennies.

IV. Developing Themes or Units and Centres of Interest

Centres of interest can be developed when children exhibit curiosity about specific topics. If an interest in homes has been sparked by one child sharing a book on homes in other countries, the teacher could prepare an outline with the following in mind:

Objectives

Children should be helped to:
- appreciate the skill of people who build homes;
- view their own homes as safe places;
- understand that homes are of many types, often very different from those found in Manitoba;
- increase vocabulary by the addition of names of homes--sampan, igloo, hut, duplex, town-house, etc;

Concepts

- climate usually determines the choice of the materials used;
- in some countries protection from animal predators is important;
- many people in the world are able to build their own homes if the structure is simple enough;
- in most countries, people must adapt local materials to their needs;
- people must learn to build homes that protect them from heat, cold, and rain;

Attitudes

Children begin to:
- recognize that all people can be resourceful in adapting their home to materials available and to the climate, e.g., igloos, sampans, beehive huts;
- feel responsible for keeping their own homes safe and attractive and show respect for other people's homes and yards (Littering, Pets, Noise, Trespassing);
- feel that all people have a right to a home;

Planning

Find books and pictures. Is there a house being built nearby? Plan a visit to it. Make models such as a wigwam, desert tent, Zulu beehive. Are classes elsewhere in the school working on this theme? Share information. Example: One kindergarten class converted their tables and chairs into Bedouin homes using rugs, towels, pillows, and scarves. The children dressed in towels, nightgowns and dressing gowns, etc., and represented the owners. They invited a class which was involved in a desert project to visit them and offered dates as refreshment. Later the intermediate class invited the kindergarten children back to see a market, mosque, a live goat, and some sheep. They were given goat's cheese and figs.

It is important that the teacher bear in mind that the processes of discussion, planning, and searching for materials are more important than the information found. If, at the end of the project, the children have developed tolerant attitudes toward people whose homes differ from theirs, the centre of interest has served a useful purpose.

Making Popcorn: A One Day Centre of Interest

Donald, a quiet withdrawn boy, had been recently enrolled in kindergarten following his December placement in a foster home. Donald was happy in his new home and the foster parents were anxious to help him adjust to his new school and companions. However, Donald was too shy to offer friendship and was barely able to accept it. At six years of age and in a new environment, he had yet to learn to trust. Donald seldom joined in during group discussions and had never brought anything to share with the other kindergarten children.

However, one Monday morning in February, Donald arrived carrying a bag and the kind of corn popper that was used freely in the days of coal ranges. It consisted of a box made of materials used for screening windows. A metal lid could be opened or locked shut and the box was attached to a long broomstick handle. Donald was animated and explained that he had made popcorn last night and Mom had sent the materials so he could make some at school.

The teacher, realizing that this was the "teachable moment", quickly extended her time for group discussion and proceeded to question Donald about exactly how popcorn was made. Donald brought popping corn, salt, and butter out of his bag and handed the corn around the circle. Each child kept a kernel and many chewed on it. A visitor in the class that morning found a hot plate and a long cord. In the meantime, the children freely discussed the kernel (using the term) and contrasted it with the kernels from corn-on-the-cob. Donald described how to use his popper and other children talked about how their mothers or fathers used electric poppers and pressure cookers to make their popcorn.

When the hot plate arrived and was plugged in, Donald put the right amount of corn in, closed the lid and pushed the popper over and back on the plate. The children waited expectantly, but nothing happened. Finally Donald said, "You didn't turn the fire on." "You are the engineer, Donald." Donald turned on the switch and once more there was hushed expectation. The bursting kernels were clearly visible and there were such remarks as "they're exploding!", "look at them burst", "they are turning inside out", and "like bombs exploding!"

Donald walked around the circle with his popper and the kernels continued to pop. In the meantime, the visitor found a big plastic bowl, the popper was dumped, and the refilled popper placed back on the heat. Donald chose children to have a turn at the "popper" and the children began to ask what made the corn pop, and if the other kind of corn would pop. Soon the bowl was full, butter and salt added, and everybody had some to eat.

Donald said, "May I take some to the principal?"

The teacher suggested that he use the intercom and invite the principal to come and see the action. Donald was frightened to speak into the communication system, but he got up on a chair, pressed the button and shouted his invitation. The principal came and enjoyed a few minutes of conversation with the children who told him how to pop corn and especially emphasized that the stove must be turned on. The question of "What makes it pop?" was answered.

About 20 minutes before snack time, the children, many of whom had been talking about popcorn during their free activity time, gathered again to compose an experience chart story about their fun with the corn popper. The conversation was lively and contributed to developing vocabulary and comprehension skills. The visitor copied the chart onto a stencil, adding suitable comments so that the paper could go home and its function could be understood by parents. The principal arranged to have the copies run off in time to decorate them before they were taken home.

After snacks, the children gathered together to "read" and "reread" the chart and their copies. Those who were not really interested went back to their free play but a group of children who were anxious to read had a very worthwhile pre-reading experience. Many children illustrated their take-home paper.

In music time, the song with the refrain, "Snug in the parlor, popping corn" was enjoyed and when gym time came and the children were in a circle to plan activities, one child said, "Can we pop up and down like the corn?" A discussion of how to act this out resulted in the children deciding to roll up like balls and to leap up and spread their limbs and bounce when Donald gave the signal on the drum. At one point several got into a huddle and called, "Bring the salt and the butter." The children also found that they could pop to "We're in the parlor popping corn." One child quietly asked, "Tomorrow can I draw pictures on the big chart?"

When it was time to go home, Donald, toting his "stick-popper", looked very happy and excited. Maybe he could not say, "The other kids accepted me" but that is what had happened!

The Experience Chart: Popping Corn. Pop! Pop! Pop!

Donald brought a popcorn maker
and some popping corn.
The teacher forgot to turn on the stove.
She put oil on the popper.
Donald put in a little bit of popcorn,
He shook it over the heat.
We listened. It cracked.
Then it exploded like bombs.
It sounded like fire-crackers.
The popcorn turned inside out.
We ate it.
It was good.
Delicious.
The principal came and ate some.

These rhymes were used with a different kindergarten class in another interest-centre.

What the children observe

- The size of the popcorn; - the kernels became bigger.
- The color of the popcorn; - the kernels changed from yellow to white.
- The texture of the popcorn; - the kernels changed from hard and shiny to soft and dull.
- The effect of heat; - most of the kernels popped. The kernels that did not pop, rattle like seeds in a can.
- Salt makes the popcorn taste better.

Variations

- Dance a simplified polka to the tune of "Jim Crack Corn".
- Develop a simplified schottische (long slide, short slide, long slide, short slide or walk, hop, walk, hop).

The Music

POPCORN IN A POT:
(Tune: I'm a Little Teapot)

I'm a little popcorn in a pot
Heat me up and watch me pop
When I get all fat and white then I'm done,
Popping popcorn is lots of fun.

POP, POP, MY CORN:
(Tune: Row, Row, Row)

Pop, pop, pop, my corn,
Pop it big and white,
Popping, popping, popping, popping
Until it is just right.

POPCORN POLKA
(Tune: Jim Crack Corn)

Jim Crack corn and I don't care
I'm popping right up in the air
I'm popping up and I'm popping down
And I'm popping right all over the town.
Pop Pop and a Pop Pop Pop
Pop Pop and a Pop Pop Pop!!

And finally, best:

Little kernels so still and quiet
Little kernels that didn't get white
Little kernels that just didn't pop
Little kernels living still in the pot.

Follow-Up Activities

- Use popcorn to decorate branches for cherry-blossom trees.
- Use picture collages - lambs, clouds, snow-banks.
- Use to introduce initial consonant "P".
- Stringing popcorn (stale popcorn works best).
- Fill litre jugs and share at snack time.
- Weigh popcorn before and after popping and discuss volume.
- Find other examples of air expanding when heated.
- Experiment with painting and dying popcorn (e.g., shake in bags or jars with different edible colored substances like jello crystals, paprika, curry powder, cocoa).

V. Field Trips

The main purposes served by field trips in kindergarten are:

- to give pleasure in going somewhere together as a group and being able to talk, discover and share: this experience contributes naturally to oral language development;
- to provide stimulation and motivation before introducing a topic: zoo, farm bakery, grocery store, etc.;
- to satisfy the curiosity which has developed in a centre of interest - farm, creamery, hatchery, etc.;
- to provide a culminating activity following a unit or centre of interest project;
- to provide an opportunity to practice social behavior, e.g., visit to a Senior Citizens' Home;
- to provide an enrichment experience for those children whose needs in this respect are not met at home, e.g., cinema, boat trip, train trip, bus trip;
- to help effect an attitude change, e.g., cross-cultural visit, culminating activity for Social Studies units from other classrooms, "twinning" with a school where children are from a different culture, adoption by "grandparents" in a Golden Age group.

Planning

The success of the trip will depend on careful planning. The teacher should preview the area to be visited to make certain that the facilities are adequate. Is there a safe place for arrival? Are toilet facilities available? How many people will be required to drive and to supervise children? Is there someone who can be placed in charge if the teacher is incapacitated or must go with a child if an emergency develops? What expenses are involved? Can travelling at peak periods be avoided? If tickets are to be bought, will the staff be willing to let each child experience purchasing his or her own ticket or should this be done by one person? Will there be an opportunity to obey traffic signals? What signals will be used to indicate where the group is assembling? Should space be reserved? What might the children learn? (Children can assimilate only so much on each visit, so expectations should be limited.)

By discussion in class, the children should be well-prepared for what they are to see and how they will be transported and assembled. They should be alerted to observe special things and to report back. They should become familiar with the vocabulary they will need en route.

Several well-planned short trips are likely to be of more benefit to young children than one long, tiring excursion. Within walking distance from most schools there are many interesting places to visit.

Assistance Needed

The teacher should not take children on a field trip unless the help of parents, responsible students, or volunteers can be secured. One adult per group of five students is recommended unless the trip is a fairly simple one by school bus or on foot. One other person, at least, must know all the details and be ready to assume the teacher's role if necessary. A name and address card (home and school) is a worthwhile precaution.

The driver must have a valid driver's license and carry third-party liability insurance. School divisions should have a policy stating the amount of insurance required. The school principal should know of and be responsible for authorizing any trip even though a class may be travelling only a short distance. With small children, trips that cannot take place between the hours of school opening and closing should be avoided.

Parents should sign a permission slip which allows the child to take part in school organized trips. They should know the purpose of each trip, when the child will return, and what type of clothing is best suited.

The teacher will have to send the letters of thanks to those people who helped but the children can draw or paint a picture of something that they enjoyed on the trip. The letters of thanks could be developed as an experience chart. The chart itself may be sent to the people concerned. Occasionally, such charts are displayed by the recipients along with the pictures the children painted or drew and may be the means of creating community interest in further field experiences for their children. Such a trip gives the children the opportunity to express thanks personally and helpers should be alerted to see that this is done courteously.

Suggestions for Field Trips

- A trip completely around a city block to see types of homes, growing things, birds, and people.
- To the Zoo to see certain animals in particular, but with free time for other exploration.
- To a farm. This can be one of the most satisfying trips for city children but requires detailed advance preparation. On a very successful trip, children were able to handle baby animals, ride on a wagon attached to a tractor, sit on machinery, and eat their lunch in the hayloft. The afternoon was given to group activities, which all shared in turn, such as:
  - watching the farmer milk a cow by hand and seeing the calf fed;
  - going into the dairy barn to watch milking by machine;
  - watching one round of the combine; and
  - going into the honey-house to watch the extractor and to taste honey and crackers.

  Most parents were so impressed with the excitement and the learning generated by this trip that they wanted assurance that it would become an annual event so their younger children would get the same opportunity to see a farm in operation.
- To local entertainment. Many groups who plan an evening performance will put on a matinee if their show is suitable for children and they can be assured of an audience.
  - puppets
  - figure skating
  - magicians
  - school bands or orchestras
  - plays and operettas by local schools
  - horse shows and trained animals
  - Shrine circus
- To a bakery, grocery store or some simple local industry which children can understand.
- To visit a Senior Citizens' Home. Many residents in these homes miss seeing children and arrangements can sometimes be made with the directors for regular monthly visits. Occasionally an adoptive relationship develops between an individual resident and a child. Children usually present a program of their games, finger plays, choral speaking, songs, dances, etc. In return, a few of the residents can be accommodated as observers in a kindergarten program. Often the child can make a gift such as a decorated juice can to be used as tooth brush or comb holder.
- To the library, grain elevator, another kindergarten, post office, local park, building site, police station, hatchery. On return to school the children talk freely; note the new vocabulary developing.
- To a child's home to see a pet, a tree-house, new baby, garden or to make something interesting.
- To a pet store to buy a pet.
- To a nursery school or a day-care centre.

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- Kindergarten
Dance Records - Preschool
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Creative Rhythms - Basic rhythms for classroom use to encourage Creative Expression of Movement
Rhythm Band Records
Nursery Rhymes and Songs: Modern Mother Goose
Rest Land Time

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Chapter Six
Observation and Evaluation

I. Observation and Evaluation

Assessing development towards becoming a healthy, effective human being is a complex and difficult task; teachers observe that children grow and change month by month, but when asked to describe this growth in terms of goals or objectives reached, they feel that the sum of the parts does not seem to express the whole. They try to help a child understand himself or herself and find meaning in living and learning but find it difficult to assess the success of the child at these very things.

By the very nature of group living, the child has been conditioned to act in ways which are acceptable to the group, but such behavior may mask the child's true feelings. Even when acting freely, the child by this stage may behave in terms of what is expected and not in terms of what he or she would prefer to do. The successful socialization of the child makes the teacher's task of assessment that much more complicated.

The teacher's assessment of the child is tentative, and feeling that evidence is lacking to support the statements he or she makes, the evaluation, when conveyed to parents, may seem vague. The teacher must attempt to satisfy the parents' desire to know both what the child is as well as what the child can do and want concrete examples of change and accomplishment. However, before beginning to describe the child by means of a check list of tasks, the teacher should first be able to answer such general questions as:

. does this child feel accepted, wanted, and well-liked?
. does this child feel able to perform and learn?
. does this child exhibit a sense of dignity and worth?

Negative answers indicate that the school and home must find ways to help the child, and teachers and parents must discuss the answers to these basic questions, preferably in a personal interview.

Observing children and recording observations should be part of the daily kindergarten program. Teacher-time must be scheduled for ongoing observation, assessment, and record keeping related to student growth and development. Ongoing observation is a necessary prerequisite for evaluation; such observation should not be random but should be related to the items to be evaluated. In preschool education, informal observation is the primary evaluation method. At this stage, however, the rate of growth of children is too rapid to allow the setting of specific standards which should be reached by all children, without seriously limiting expectations for the older or rapidly-maturing child or frustrating the younger and slow-maturing child. Once goals and standards are stated and formalized, there is always the danger that the program will confine itself to attempting to reach these goals. Just because five-year olds are willing to conform and are interested in trying to please adults, they must not be pressured into any intense training in order to reach pre-determined standards by an evaluation date. At the same time, gifted children must not be allowed to become bored with a program that offers little challenge once a pre-determined standard has been reached.

It is suggested that teachers should review the desired outcomes listed in Chapter Four (pgs. 28-31) and make an informal list of those which are reasonable for particular students to accomplish, by the time an assessment is to be made. Teachers should note special outcomes to satisfy individual needs and should not confine themselves to the objectives suggested but should add items of their own and set their own times for determining whether or not these goals are being approximated. Teachers are referred to Appendix 2 for a sample of an evaluation checklist.

Observation and Evaluation Check List

The following observation check list is provided to help teachers in observation and evaluation but some items must be judged subjectively. It is possible to test items such as physical skill, growth in co-ordination of large and small muscles, and academic readiness, but an evaluation confined to these items only does not provide a true picture of the child's growth. Even in the case of these observable skills, it is not possible to set standards which must be reached by all children.

Social and Personal Skills

The child demonstrates an increasing ability to:

- join in group activities happily,
- make choices,
- share,
- accept responsibility,
- respect the rights of others,
- show leadership qualities,
- show a positive and realistic self-image,
- concentrate,
- complete tasks,
- put away materials used,
- react reasonably to correction,
- develop good work habits,
- use a varied vocabulary,
- use a variety of sentence forms.

Physical Coordination

The child has established handedness and is able to:

- tie shoe laces;
- walk forward on balance beams;
- walk backward on balance beams;
- climb stairs up and down, one foot at a time;
- climb a ladder;
- cut around a simple shape;
- cut along straight, curved, and zig-zag lines;
- move rhythmically;
- skip with a rope;
- catch a thrown bean bag;
- catch a ball in a cup;
- hold crayons in fingers rather than fist;
- turn pages of a book one page at a time;
- match shapes of △ □ ▭ and ○ when plain symbols are used;
- recognize these shapes in designs, furniture, materials and cookies;
- copy X △ ▭
- put head and legs on when drawing a person. Some children will put in more detail;
- paint pictures with recognizable objects in them;
- throw balls overhand.

Concentration and physical coordination are required in order to walk on a balance beam or tie shoe laces.

Cognitive and Perceptual Skills

The child is able to:

- think independently;
- recognize a few sight words - his or her name,
  stop sign,
  bus stop,
  labelled areas;
- differentiate between left and right;
- name the shapes ○ △ □
- recognize the solid shapes ball and cube;
- match symbols that are alike or different in shape,
  size,
  color,
  and position in space;
- * identify these alphabet letters: ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___;
- count to 10 by rote;
- count rationally (one-to-one correspondence to six);
- * recognize these number symbols ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___;
- recognize rhyme when heard, and produces a word to rhyme with a given word;
- * is able to hear the following consonants ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___;
- * recognize these colors ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___;
- is able to string beads in patterns;
- is able to provide missing parts in a pattern;
- is able to dial his or her own phone number;
- is able to arrange objects in order according to size;
- draw figures using more details than he or she did in a drawing made in September.

* Teacher's choice

Improving Observational Skills

To be a good teacher, one must be a keen and objective observer of children. Good observation is a skill that has to be learned and practiced. As part of their training practicum, many teachers will have had instruction and help in learning how to observe. However, teachers are not naturally more objective in their observations than other people and must learn to recognize and interpret behavior and to withhold passing judgement until they can gather more evidence. Observers must also examine personal biases and be quite frank with themselves about the kind of child or type of behavior which pleases or irritates them. They must also ask themselves whether or not they have been conditioned to think of academic and verbal learning as the only worthwhile learning. Even though adults approve of the child who can sing, paint and is well coordinated, they feel that these accomplishments must be accompanied by good academic performance in order to be fully acceptable.

The behavior of young children is spontaneous, impulsive, and emotionally spurred. Their logic is different from that of adults, but it is right for them and should be respected; the transition to adult logic usually occurs in the teen years. From the viewpoint of the adult, children's behavior often appears changeable and unpredictable. It is, however, an honest expression of their feelings at the time. Children also express their feelings and thoughts in a physical manner and often react totally in terms of their physical needs. Consequently, observers must make an attempt to avoid judging children using terms that imply that the children's behavior is unacceptable by adult standards.

The processes by which a child copes with life are important measures of the maturity of that child. The adult concept of childhood as a time of helplessness and as a time when children should be manipulated and controlled, must be set aside if parents and teachers want to see the child become self-directed, self-motivated, and responsible for his or her actions. They must, therefore, try to observe signs that the child is beginning to develop inner strengths. It is not easy to observe whether or not a child is happy and growing in self-confidence. Some questions which should be answered are:

- is the child concerned and anxious when learning something new?
- is he or she fearful of adult reactions to mistakes, spills, and accidents?
- can the child accept criticism?
- what is the child's reaction to misplacing something?
- is the child worried about things at home?
- can he or she make friends?
- does the child need constant reassurance that he or she is doing well and is satisfying the adults concerned?

Though the child cannot give answers to these questions, his or her body language may provide them. The child's posture, tempo, gestures, tilt of the head and thrust of the jaw may give clues; facial expression and the tone of voice may reveal thoughts and feelings.

Evaluating Readiness for Formal Reading Instruction

The principal and the teachers who are to receive the children in Primary One usually expect the kindergarten teacher to provide them with some indication of readiness for formal reading instruction; joint planning is necessary, therefore, for any children who may not be developmentally ready for a regular program. Children who require 2-7 additional months of readiness experiences should be grouped in Primary One so that they will be given this opportunity. Because of the learning activities and games included in programs designed for Stage B children, these programs can be used with children requiring readiness experiences. The children who have mastered the readiness skills should be identified. They can be grouped together in Primary One for beginning reading instruction. If it appears in June that a child needs another 8-12 months of maturation time before being expected to cope with formal reading instruction, the child should be given the privilege of another year in kindergarten wherever possible. Chapter Four, Section III offers administrative suggestions for setting up classes to meet the needs of these children.

Readiness Skills

There are many check lists of readiness skills. A sample inventory is given on page
Some of these items are more critical indicators of success than others and a busy kindergarten teacher with fifty children may wish to confine assessment to the areas of:

- oral skills in the language of instruction;
- auditory discrimination of likenesses and differences;
- discrimination of visual details of size, color, shape, position, place relationship;
- motor coordination; and
- emotional stability and self-confidence.

Oral Language Skills

If the kindergarten program has emphasized oral language development, the teacher will be aware of the few children who have not reached Stage B. These children could be grouped previous to assessment time so that they are given extra opportunities to take part in conversation in small groups, to follow directions, and to take part in vocabulary development exercises. A child who has had normal opportunity to develop language skills and has not done so, is likely to have problems in early reading; building the child's language strength is, therefore, a goal towards which the teacher and parents will need to work together.

The verbal items in the tests found in Appendix 3, can be used to test language development when teachers feel the need to have a standardized measurement.

Auditory Skills

- Initial consonant likenesses
  - (a) Lay out pictures such as a boat, frog, bear and balloon. Say the names of the pictures. Have the child say them with you and then ask him or her to pick out the one that does not begin like "boy" and "ball".
  - (b) Use dog, doctor, ball and duck. Find the one that begins like "boy". This test requires fine discrimination.

- Rhyme
  Use the same technique but place pictures in rows where all but one rhyme or where only two rhyme.

e.g.	boat	coat	hat	goat
	dog	horse	duck	frog

Children who have had experience with picture cards in the learning centres and who have accomplished these tasks need not be tested.

Visual Discrimination

A child whose visual perception is so underdeveloped that he or she cannot discriminate between shapes as unalike as are △ and □ cannot learn to read by the usual teaching methods. Most children of age five are able to see fine differences in size, color, shape and position in space. A child who can name accurately M, L, B, G, P, D, F, J, E or a, f, b, w, c, h, d, r, t has good visual perception and can learn to see differences as fine as those found in such words as ran and run, big and pig; no finer visual discrimination is necessary at the pre-reading stage.

A child who cannot name some of the letters of the alphabet does not necessarily lack visual ability, but may never have had any experience in or reason for making such discrimination. The teacher can use the following tests of differences to determine the degree of visual discrimination present:

A. Make 4 cards with shape E on them and
1 card with shape [on it.

(1) Place 4 cards in the position:

E [E E

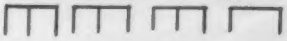
Pick out the one that is different — 1 point

(2) Place 4 cards in the position:

E E Ǝ E

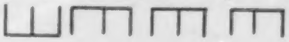
Pick out the one that is different — 1 point

(3) Turn 4 cards in the position:



Pick out the one that is different — 1 point

(4) Turn 4 cards in the position:



Pick out the one that is different — 1 point

B. Using letter tickets or cards set up the following tests of difference. Pick out the card that is different.

(1)	DH	DH	DH	ᗡH	1 point
(2)	CX	CX	XC	CX	1 point
(3)	FLO	FJO	FLO	FLO	1 point
(4)	SET	SET	SET	ƧET	1 point

C. Using letter tickets or cards set up the following tests of difference. Pick out the card that is different.

(1)	RHNG	RHNG	RNHG	RHNG	1 point
(2)	JWOK	JWOK	JWOK	ႱWOK	1 point
(3)	KETN	KTEN	KTEN	KTEN	1 point
(4)	OEOX	OEOX	OXOE	OEOX	1 point

D. Pick out the card that is different

(1)	CABIN	CANIB	CABIN	CABIN	1 point
(2)	ROLER	RULER	RULER	RULER	1 point

How to score

Give test A. Children who score 3 or better, go on to B.
Give test B. Children who score 3 or better have reached a level where one could reasonably suppose that they can learn to recognize differences in letters and words. These children should take test C. Children who score 2 or better on test C should be considered to have reached a good standard of visual discrimination of differences. It is not necessary to do any further testing but teachers might wish to try out test D. (Usually only those children who have learned to read or who know the names of all the letters of the alphabet can gain these 2 points.)

A total score of 6 on tests A + B indicates an acceptable perception of differences.
A total score of 8 on tests A + B + C indicates a good perception of differences.
A total score of 12-14 on tests A + B + C + D indicates an excellent perception of differences.

The ability to see likenesses develops more slowly than the ability to see differences. The following test of likeness can be used:

(1)	△	O	▽	O	1 point
(2)	G	C	O	G	1 point
(3)	AL	A⅃	A⅃	LA	1 point
(4)	CIN	DIN	CNI	CIN	1 point
(5)	HPOK	HPOK	HKOP	H9OK	1 point
(6)	WINK	MINK	WINK	KINW	1 point
(7)	SILVER	ƧELVIR	SIVLER	SILVER	1 point
(8)	BPRHD	BPHRD	BPRND	BDHRP	1 point

Children who can score 3 out of 8 are likely to be able to learn to see likenesses in letters and words. (If guessing is suspected, repeat the first three tests varying the order.) Children who score 4 or 5 have good skill in this area. Scores higher than 5 would indicate that the child's perception of likenesses is extremely well developed and that a beginning in reading has already been made.

Motor coordination

Good motor coordination seems to be an asset in learning to read, usually indicating both that the child has reached a stage of maturity where formal reading instruction can be introduced and suggesting that the child's perceptual skills are well-developed. Poorly coordinated children certainly learn to read, however, and teaching should not be delayed if the child seems ready otherwise, keeping in mind that children who cannot print the letters as they learn the sounds that correspond to them are handicapped to some degree. Note that children in kindergarten should not be expected to have learned to form the letters, but the large and small muscle activities they have should have made it possible for them to learn to print as they learn to read. The multi-media approach to reading instruction should be used wherever possible.

Emotional stability and self-confidence

Children who are self-confident, independent, and have a sense of self-worth and responsibility usually profit more than an insecure child from beginning reading instruction. If insecure children can learn to read without strain, they may become more confident about their abilities. However, if they do not succeed initially, they may become withdrawn and persuade themselves that they do not really want to learn anyway; in this case, too early a beginning will make it more difficult to learn later. The teacher must, therefore, consider the other strengths of a child with a poor self-concept before embarking on a program of reading instruction. Special care must be taken to see that these children experience success in initial pre-reading and early reading instruction.

Mental Ability

Many writers suggest that a child should have reached a mental maturity rate of 6.5 years before beginning to read. Mental maturity ratings can be obtained by using intelligence tests, but such testing is not recommended unless there is a special reason for wanting to obtain a standardized evaluation of a particular child's development, and should be administered by Child Guidance Clinic personnel or by the school psychologists. Intelligence tests usually rely heavily on items dealing with ability to interpret oral language, see likenesses and differences, see patterns, organize into categories, count rationally to 9, follow directions, understand word meaning, see special relationships, and initiate conversation. These skills are in effect being assessed daily in the kindergarten in an informal manner; however, formal tests may be useful when parents seek another opinion.

Summary of Evaluation of the Kindergarten Child

The aim of the kindergarten program is to foster growth and development of the whole child and the report to parents must include assessment of all aspects of growth. Teachers will need to consider all the information they have been able to gather from careful observation and record-keeping. The Observation and Evaluation Check List (pages 126-127) can be a useful reference. In discussion with parents, teachers should focus on what the child can do rather than what the child can not do, and help them understand how significant the child's self-concept is to future learning. The school can be supportive of the child and provide opportunities to extend learning experiences, but it is the environment and acceptance the child finds at home which ultimately determines how good his or her self-concept becomes.

In evaluating and reporting on the progress of kindergarten children, teachers should not yield to pressure to assess only academic readiness. When the testing of pre-academic skills becomes important to the exclusion of assessment of growth in other areas, there is a tendency to teach for this kind of test. Children whose instruction has been oriented towards achieving high scores on readiness tests, generally lose this force-fed readiness during the summer holidays; the natural readiness that has developed as a result of the games and activities in kindergarten is internalized and will remain with the child. A reference list of reading readiness tests is included in Appendix 3 for those teachers who wish to use them, but informal testing is recommended. When a teacher feels certain that a child is ready for reading, formal testing should not be necessary. The testing suggestions are made for use with those children who may fall into two groups: those needing more readiness training and those who need longer time in a kindergarten program.

In order to group children on the basis of the kind of help they will need to prepare to read, the teacher must survey their reading readiness needs. The following Informal Reading Readiness Inventory may help to formulate the reading groups; if a child receives more than two "no's" in any one segment of the inventory, he or she is not likely to be ready for formal instruction.

Listening Skills

- Is able to listen with sustained attention for a reasonable length of time.
- Is interested in hearing stories.
- Listens while others are talking.
- Can hear likenesses and differences in sound and words.
- Can follow directions.

Oral Language Skills

- Has the oral vocabulary needed to express an idea.
- Speaks clearly.
- Is able to tell a short story.
- Seems eager to talk and express ideas.
- Speaks in sentences.
- Initiates conversations.
- Seeks help in understanding new vocabulary.
- Able to organize ideas in sequence.
- Supplies endings to sentences and simple stories.

Reading Skills

- Sees likenesses and differences.
- Has good accurate discrimination of visual details such as size, color, shape, spatial relationship, and direction.
- Has formed the habit of using left-to-right and top-to-bottom progression. Holds book right side up and moves from front to back.
- Handles books carefully.
- Demonstrates a desire to read.
- Distinguishes slight differences in the internal features of forms, e.g., C and E, he and me.
- Distinguishes differences in positions.
- Can recognize sequence of forms.

Writing Skills

- Has good motor coordination.
- Shows a desire in learning to write.
- Traces with pencil or crayon the dotted lines which form the outline of familiar objects like animals, toys.
- Traces dotted lines of printed words.
- Marks neatly pictures in which specific directions for marking are given.

Communicating with Parents

Parent-Teacher Interviews

A frank and open discussion with parents is the best method of getting and giving information about the child. Despite the problem that interviews are time-consuming and difficult to schedule parents and teachers should have the opportunity to talk together and share what they know about each particular child, at least twice a year. In order to make these interviews possible, teachers need some release time but may also have to schedule some evening appointments.

In order to use interview time to advantage, teachers should have the child's record file available with the observation check lists up to date. Many teachers like to send home a written report in advance of the meeting. This may serve as a basis for discussion if no other matter takes priority. Parents should be encouraged to initiate discussion about their concerns.

In early June, parents should receive an assessment of their child's progress during the kindergarten year. Teachers should indicate how the child has developed socially. When the child has some particular problems in interacting with either groups or individuals, these problems should be outlined, and parent and teacher together should consider how the child may be helped. In most cases, a child who has problems at school also has them at home: if the teacher can get the parent talking about home problems, the parent is neither surprised nor resentful when the teacher pin-points a similar behavior at school.

Sample dialogue:

Teacher: "Little children typically like to be "first", but do you find that Joan always tries to be first in everything at home?"

Parent: "She tries but doesn't succeed very often. Jim, her older brother generally gets the best of Joan every time. I am always having to make him give her a chance. He takes the front seat in the car, switches to the T. V. programs he wants, and is always getting into hot water for using her things. I get so tired of their squabbling."

Teacher: "Maybe this is why she pushes so hard for toys, turns and privileges here. Other children sometimes resent her attitude and she loses friends. How can we help her?"

A discussion that concentrates on ways of improving the home situation and helping Joan at school may have more positive results than going over a check list. Teacher and parents must be prepared to accept that their own behavior may contribute to some of the child's problems.

Parents will also have opinions about effective and cognitive development. If, during the year, a teacher feels that the child has made little progress in learning the academic preliminaries, he or she should discuss this frankly with the parent. Taking into consideration the child's age, the teacher may want the parent to consider whether or not this child should enter Primary One in September. It should be indicated whether the child will require some months of readiness work. This may be the best time to discuss the possibility of a four-year primary program.

Partnership of Parents and Teachers

Before a child comes to school, parents are the most influential teachers. Once the child comes to school, another adult assumes some of the responsibility for that child's well-being. Both that which takes place at home and that which takes place at school will now determine the direction of development; it is neither desirable nor possible to divide the areas of responsibility. The teacher may feel that the major concern is to foster intellectual growth but is well aware that he or she is teaching the whole child and that all children have emotional, social and physical needs which must be met. The parents may feel inclined to leave the responsibility for intellectual growth with the teacher, but they are becoming increasingly aware of the important part they can play in stimulating a child's thinking and in creating a healthy attitude toward learning. Many parents are actively seeking help in providing the environment their growing child needs, because they know that research has shown that the years of early childhood are critical in setting the pattern for future growth. They know that the skills a young child develops in social relations, the methods he or she adopts in dealing with frustrations and disappointments, the degree of permissiveness experienced in the home and how the child feels about him/herself, have a bearing on whether or not that child will be a happy and productive person.

In cities, there has been a rapid growth in demand for classes on parenting, and for observation nurseries and kindergartens. Parent-study groups have been formed. In rural areas, it is more difficult to set up these services but, increasingly, health units, child-development services, and in some cases local school divisions are trying to provide services for parents. Frequently parents turn to the child's kindergarten teacher for help and advice in child management and in planning for school entrance.

Some school divisions are meeting the need for parent counselling in the following ways:

1. The preschool supervisor sets up classes in parenting to give general advice, to explain the needs of young children, and to explain the programs in local schools. This is followed by classroom observation sessions with rotating small groups of parents;

2. Local teachers are given release time to plan or run short classes on parenting. This is only possible where teachers have a trained aide who can work with volunteers;

3. In-service days are used to set up classes or workshops. Teachers and parents attend together and visiting speakers or local teachers give leadership. Since many parents have baby-sitting problems during in-service days, provision should be made for child-care services within the school;

4. Children's Aid Societies or other groups with an interest in preventative and outreach programs, set up nurseries for children who need enrichment programs. Their parents meet once or twice a week in the nursery for at least half an hour. This observation period is followed by discussions led by a teacher, a worker, or a volunteer. Social workers report that the most difficult task is to overcome the reluctance of the parents to attend these sessions. Once an attendance pattern is established, these parents feel more relaxed in talking about their children, and it is then possible to provide individual counselling and group therapy;

5. Volunteer aid programs get parents working in the formal education setting. Volunteers require an ongoing training program because they must understand and respect the teacher's philosophy of handling children and try to follow his or her methods. Instruction can be informal and on a day-to-day basis in the classroom but some large group sessions are advised. Volunteers can interpret the school program to people in the community.

Bibliography

The child's essential needs in early childhood are for love and acceptance, socialization, language growth, intellectual stimulation, safety, and sensible nutrition. The following books provide useful information:

Bereiter, Carl and Anderson, V. Thinking Games. Vol. 1 and Vol. 2. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1975.

Froman, Robert. Bigger Smaller. Scranton: Crowell, 1971.

Ungerer, Tomi. Snail Where Are You? New York: Harper & Row, 1962.

Teachers are referred to the extensive bibliography following Chapter Seven.

Chapter Seven
How Parents Contribute to the Creation of Favorable Learning Conditions for Young Children

I. Parents as Teachers

Parents are the child's first teachers and have the responsibility of guiding and teaching the child during the most formative years. Parents, therefore, need help and support as they become aware, for the first time, that knowledge and skill are necessary for good parenting and that being "just a parent" is a cause for pride. Where do they turn for help in nurturing social, emotional, moral, and intellectual growth?

The people in any school division most qualified to help parents are probably the early childhood and the resource teachers, and their talents should be used, wherever possible, to improve the quality of parenting in the community. School divisions are urged, therefore, to try to provide some services to parents, particularly if they have reason to feel that some children grow up in home environments which inhibit growth. One school, for example, has developed an excellent toy lending library. The games and books have been carefully chosen to stimulate intellectual growth, muscle coordination, and visual discrimination, and parents come one afternoon a week for a discussion and to listen to a speaker. The preschoolers that they have brought with them play together supervised by older pupils; when they go home, they take a new toy with them to be returned the following week. Many inner-city schools report improvement in children entering school when enrichment nurseries and parenting classes have been organized. Additional suggestions are made in Chapter Six for various administrative arrangements by which teachers can be released periodically for this important task.

The material in this chapter has been compiled with two purposes in mind. First, it is intended for school divisions, schools, or individual teachers who are searching for information that could be used as the basis for a course in parenting; second, it is designed for transmission to parents who are seeking direct help in being "just a parent".

II. Helping Parents Understand Language Development

Preschool Language Development

It is not possible to over-emphasize the significance of language as a fundamental part of the learning process. Since the best years for language development are the first five, the contribution which parents and other interested adults can make to the preschool child's development, are very important. Before coming to school, the normally developing child acquires the speech patterns which are the basis for all future language learning. Thought and language processes are interrelated and it is highly likely that the child who comes to school deficient in language skills also has deficiencies in the thinking-reasoning processes. If the language the child brings to school is so immature as to restrict his or her learning capacity, then months must be spent while the school helps that child build language strengths.

How Speech Develops

The very young infant responds to sensory experiences but the world itself has little meaning and is not understood as separate from the self. The child responds to pain and discomfort by crying, and to comfort and security by murmurs, a few smiles, and simply by being quiet. However, visual discrimination begins to develop; the child comes to recognize those who are the source of comfort and reassurance.

If these adults talk in loving tones, the child begins to distinguish and react favorably to their voices. As auditory discrimination improves, the child begins to recognize human voices in general and the benefactor's voice in particular. Learning to differentiate sounds is fundamental to language learning and soon the child will absorb some of the language that is heard.

Next the child finds that by blowing and using the vocal organs, noises can be made. This babbling is the beginning of speech. At first it is meaningless, but as it quickly becomes coupled with gestures and facial expression, the child is able to communicate. At times, the child just babbles for the sheer joy of the feel of the sounds that leave the throat and tongue and tickle the lips. Parents should talk back to this babbling, however, since the next stage in language development is imitation. From now, until about five years of age, the child with normally developed speech organs can mimic any sound heard; for this reason, young children become multi-lingual much more readily than older children. By age five, the child has practiced the sounds of his or her own language but is, however, rapidly losing the ability to imitate new sounds which have yet to be encountered.

The stage of imitation develops into early speech by the learning process called conditioning and this learning depends on reinforcement. If the child hears and says the word car when one is visible, parents are delighted and repeat the word. The child says it again and again is reinforced by adult approval; thus the auditory response car has become attached to the visual stimulation of car. As parents continue to present sight and sound together, more and more connections are made.

The next stage is the one in which words are linked together into meaningful units. The child copies the models heard but often uses only the important words "me go car"; the meaning is quite clear. If the parents repeat the full sentence, the child, in time, will say "me want to go in the car" and finally, "I want to go in the car." From this point on, the rate at which vocabulary is developed and sentences are constructed will depend largely on how much the child is included in conversations and how much he or she is encouraged to make use of growing language skills. Body language may still be used when the words required are not there; this sub-vocal language is an asset and will become oral if interested adults listen and respond. Children with older brothers and sisters receive language stimulation from them. Parents who leave their children with others for most of the day should try to make certain that those persons will provide language stimulation. Let the child absorb as much language as possible.

When the child reaches the "why" stage, parents may become exhausted trying to answer questions. The child is now beginning to think in a fairly mature way, and may even know the answer to the questions asked but be unable to formulate them. This is a stage where the parent can provide information or, by judicious questioning, help the child to find his or her own answers. Adults should not simplify their language in the child's presence just because the child has a limited vocabulary. Explain new words using familiar vocabulary, but continue to use the new word in conversations with the child.

Children learn to talk more freely among their playmates. For a child who lacks playmates of a similar age, parents sometimes arrange a play group. Children in a play group should be left on their own to talk and react but, at times, adult presence may be needed to bring out a shy child or take advantage of situations where language experience can be shared and extended. In nursery school and kindergarten, the best conversations frequently develop in the housekeeping centre and around the water and sand play areas. Parents can duplicate these areas in their own yards. Boxes, tires, planks, ropes and banging tools generally get children engrossed in talking, arguing, planning, and asking questions. Pets are also good subjects for conversation.

Having a conversation with friends.

Teachers are aware that most linguistically deprived children need special help when they attempt to explain ideas and emotions. Where parents have restricted their conversations to brief commands, the child has given up both trying to formulate questions and to figure out answers. Such children should not be placed in special groups. These children need the stimulation that comes from contact with children who speak well and are confident in their use of language.

Parents should not step out of their role as language teachers when the child goes to school. In school, the child may have to share an adult listener with many other children and the quiet child may just give up trying to join in. Volunteers and aides in a classroom can serve a particularly useful purpose as listeners and language stimulators.

Telling or reading stories to a child is a good way to improve language, especially if old favorites are retold enough times that the child can join in by providing some of the material. Reading poetry gives the child the enjoyment that comes from hearing words chosen for their pleasing sounds and provides the feeling for rhythm and rhyme needed in learning to read.

The judicious use of television can also stimulate language growth, but passive listening is not enough. The child needs to talk about the program he or she has watched and to use the new vocabulary acquired. Taking the child to a zoo, playground, or a circus could be a better language builder than television, because conversation takes place at the time it is most relevant.

Since the main influence on a child's language lies outside of school, parents and society must share the responsibility for the quality of language children learn.

III. How Children Learn

Current research shows that successful learning and teaching depend on a number of variables. How soon and how well children complete each learning task is determined, among other factors by:

. attitude

Children who approach tasks with eagerness, confidence, and trust in the teacher usually achieve success. Children learn better if they value the skills and knowledge they will acquire by completing tasks. Prior success in a similar learning situation usually contributes to a positive attitude toward the new task;

. innate ability

Children vary in ability and learning style. However, providing the child's intelligence falls within the normal range and the child is developmentally ready for the task assigned, most teachers agree that success in learning depends more on the child's past experience and a teacher's skill in developing suitable learning strategies than on the child's potential as measured on a standardized test.

(Many children never reach their measured potential; others far exceed the growth rate assigned to them when attitude and learning environments are favourable);

. prior and related knowledge and skills

Examples: (1) A child able to remove screw top lids should begin to generalize that the direction for removal is almost always the same, counter-clockwise, and that placing a lid on tightly is done by turning it the opposite direction. The knowledge that a lid which will not screw on when turned in one direction and probably will go on if turned in the other direction, is functional; (2) A child who is certain of the colors blue and green is able to deal with a color that may be blue-green, and so be ready to learn a name for the new color; (3) A child who has learned to ride a tricycle may have some steering skills to bring to the task of learning to ride a two-wheeler. Riding the tricycle will not have taught balance; however, other activities, such as walking on a fence rail, may have improved this sense.

. the skill and ingenuity of the teacher

The teacher must make or find some concrete teaching aid to clarify the concept he or she wishes to develop. However, if the child's attitude is a negative one, or if the child lacks the necessary prior skills, no strategy which the teacher can devise is likely to bring about the desired learning at this time. The teacher must then take time to develop the desired attitude and/or teach the missing skills. Because considerable time is needed to make these adjustments, this child will usually fall behind the other children in the class, at least for a time. Such a slowing in the early stages of school generally has very negative effects on the child's self-concept.

. home environment

While innate ability is acknowledged by research, it is felt that much of the difference in ability among children can be explained in terms of differences in the home environment, which, to a large degree, will determine what skills and attitudes children will develop prior to coming to school.

A good home environment provides continuous language stimulation and gives children many opportunities to share and work with caring adults. Adults who show that they value good work habits, and who require some responsibility on the part of their children, set the stage for positive attitudes toward living and learning. Children who have enjoyed discovering their own capabilities, who are proud to learn things quickly and efficiently, and who want to take on some responsibility for their own development generally respond well to school programs. Parents should, therefore, be interested in making the best use of those valuable early learning years, be alert to know what skills are important and necessary, and recognize that the kind of interaction that takes place between their children and themselves has a lasting effect on the growth of each child.

IV. Areas of Development to Emphasize

These activities have been grouped under the headings: language, body awareness and movement, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, visual discrimination, and auditory discrimination. However, most activities will contribute to the development of more than one skill. For example, language growth should occur in almost every activity if the parent is actively involved. Tasks which develop fine motor skills will probably increase both visual discrimination and body awareness. Parents should be aware of all developmental areas and try to use to the full those learning opportunities which are provided by a child's rich play life.

Language Development

Much of the learning which takes place in school comes through the medium of language. Children who come to school able to express themselves fluently and precisely in the language of instruction have a distinct advantage over those whose language skills are immature. In school children have to listen to and interpret instructions; they must be able to frame their own questions and express their ideas confidently; they have to learn to organize their thoughts and comprehend what others say to them. How well they can do this in the early stages, depends on the richness of the language experience they have had in their preschool years. In summation, for language skills to develop well, children must:

- hear language from birth so that they learn to speak by imitation;
- be talked to directly and have their own faltering attempts to express themselves listened to and appreciated;
- be exposed to and encouraged to use an increasingly larger vocabulary, more complex forms of expression, and correct grammatical structures;
- be challenged to organize their thoughts;
- learn to listen carefully.

Suggestions for Language Activities

1. Talk to children even when they are unable to understand what is being said, because hearing language creates the sub-vocal language needed for speech. The child will begin to distinguish certain words which are important to him or her, e.g., bottle, mum, car, bath, etc.

2. Repeat each word that the child begins to use and show pleasure in this growing skill.

3. Interpret the fragmentary sentences that children use and express these back to them, e.g., "Me want go" may be repeated as "You want to go in the car, too?" "I happy", may be returned as "Good! I am happy too." Sometimes a child's simple "No" may require a sentence such as, "Don't you want to have your bath now?" Accept patiently the limited language the child uses and remember that each child is going through the experience of learning a foreign language. Try to understand the mistakes that the child makes; they may be very reasonable. A child who calls the first earthworm he or she sees, a "baby snake" has certainly abstracted some of the snake characteristics from the snakes or pictures of snakes which have been seen. "Cup-plate" is an intelligent description of a saucer and "holiday-truck" does describe some campers.

4. Tell stories and read to children as much as is possible. Discuss the stories and encourage the child to join you in reciting some of the exciting parts, e.g., "The great grey, green, greasy Limpopo River, all girt gut about with fever trees!"

5. Give children ample opportunities to speak and be listened to. It is easier to "put the words into their mouths", but give them the chance to organize and express themselves and to answer questions directed to them. When someone asks a child's name, age, or address, give the child a chance to answer.

6. Enrich the child's vocabulary to distinguish between such "look-alikes" as horses and cattle. Later it may be possible to recognize a Holstein, a Hereford, or an Angus. Encourage the use of words like colt, fawn, calf, etc., instead of just using the diminutive, "baby". Becoming aware of clues to distinguish the makes of cars and names of service stations fosters the development of classification and observation skills, both of which are prereading skills.

7. Eliminate "talking down" to children as soon as possible. Children who constantly hear mature forms of speech learn to reproduce them.

8. Buy books for the very young and encourage them to talk about pictures. These pictures may lend themselves to telling a story in sequence in which the children supply their own words.

9. Create games in which children must follow verbal instructions. Begin by having the children carry out one instruction at a time, gradually increasing the number of instructions in the series. "Go to the button box and find a button with two holes in it. Bring it to me and put it in my apron pocket." Children should have a turn at giving directions too.

10. Encourage children to anticipate outcomes in stories and to express what is likely.

11. If there is reason to believe that the child has a speech problem, seek help early. If the problem stems from a real malfunction of speech organs, medical help may be needed. However, do not become overanxious if a child has difficulty making a few sounds; this is normal in a preschooler and will likely disappear before school age. Some consonants require the use of small tongue muscles which may not be developed until a child is six or seven years old.

A rich home environment that encourages language growth and lively discussion will enhance a child's natural interest in exploring the world and expressing feelings and opinions. It is not expected that children should be taught to read before they come to school, but if books are built into the environment, children will establish the life-long habit of looking to books for information and pleasure.

Body Awareness and Movement

Preschool children are learning to control muscles and are becoming aware of what their bodies can do; therefore, they need space and opportunity to run, jump, climb, and dance. They not only have to learn how to move, but also how to stop moving without falling. Groups of children enjoy games where movement must cease at a given signal; the game, "musical bumps", for example, provides real pleasure. Children can profit by learning to run or hop backwards or sideways or to turn a somersault in time or on signal. No game, however, should go on past the point when children are enjoying it.

The following exercises focusing on different parts of the body can be used to give children experience with the many movements they can make. As they become more aware of what the body can do, some of the exercises can be set to music:

Legs: walk - frontwards, sideways, backwards, slide and glide in all directions.
hop - high, low, softly, thumping in all directions, on one leg or two. (Note which leg the child prefers when hopping on one foot.)
gallop and prance - preferably to a given beat.
jump - two-legged and one-legged, in any direction and over a given space or obstacle. Lift legs together and singly.

Arms:
- How far will they stretch?
- Wiggle fingers with arms extended.
- Bend arms at elbow.
- Hands on hips, rotate arms as far as they will go.
- Clasp hands - when arms extended, in lap.
- Wiggle fingers. What separation is possible at this stage?
- Clench fists - punch balls, bags or cushions.
- Punch upward, sideways, forward.
- Rotate trunk with arms extended.
- Begin to talk about right and left.

The following activities demonstrate how arms help in balancing:

- Run with the arms free and then with the arms held to the sides; jump with the arms free and then held to the sides. Do this with as many movements as possible and discuss how arms help to balance. (Spinning with arms folded will draw attention to the need for free arm movement.)
- Make a balance beam with two concrete blocks and a board several feet long and a little wider than the child's shoe. Let the child practice walking along this in a natural way. Then have the child walk with the arms folded.
- Use the elbow as a pointer. Run with the other arm free and the elbow leading the way. Come back following the other elbow.

Head: drop it forward, backward and sideways-rotate in all directions as far as possible.

Knees: bend as far as possible, go down slowly, come up slowly, go down fast and come up fast.

Whole body:
- Move each body part, in turn, keeping time with music or a rhythmic noise.
- Move as many body parts as possible, simultaneously.
- Hop, holding some kind of noise-maker.
- Walk around. When a tambourine is played, stop walking and shake to the rhythm.

Eye-hand coordination: Playing with bean-bags or balls is an excellent way of developing eye-hand coordination. Bean-bags can be used more easily in the home since it is not necessary to use them in an open space.

Instruct children to:

- kick the bag and hop over it. Travel around the room in this manner;
- throw the bag across a line, a rope or into a circle;
- pivot around with one foot on the bag and the other one used as a pusher;
- go in a straight line sliding the bag with one foot and pushing with the other;
- begin tossing the bag gently and catching it. On a given signal sit on the bag and raise arms;
- sit on the floor with bag in front. Place alternate elbows and then both elbows on the bag;
- hop with the bag between knees, on head, one bag on each shoulder;

- stretch arms out and walk forward three steps, carrying bag in fist, between thumb and first finger, on end of second finger, on back of palm;
- put bean-bag on head and drop it on floor bending head forward, backward, sideways;
- sit in a kneeling position with bag behind. Try to touch the bag with head;
- run with the bean-bag. On signal place the bag on the part of body designated by caller. At times the caller can be specific about left or right if children can handle this;
- toss bags into pail;
- toss bags to a partner;
- toss bags into a basket placed up high;
- play dodge ball using bags.

As children gain proficiency in eye-hand coordination, balls can be substituted for bags. Balls that have lost most of their bounce work best for small children. Later lively balls can be used.

Gross Motor Development

Closely tied in with the child's need to be aware of the parts of the body is the need to develop control over gross motor movements. It has been observed that children who develop good motor coordination and are rhythmic in their movements generally learn better in school. The child's normal vigorous play activities provide all the exercise needed. However, many children are denied this activity because they have no place to play, have no playmates, and little equipment; this may be particularly true of apartment dwellers.

All children need a place outdoors and indoors where they can engage in vigorous and often noisy activities. They need slides, swings, and climbing equipment to investigate heights and accustom their eyes to this movement; they need teeters as well as balance beams to develop their sense of equilibrium. Boxes can be used as trains, tunnels, or to make play houses; old tires can be turned into swings and climbing equipment. A smooth pole, firmly planted provides a place for running in circles with one hand holding the pole; two poles suggest figure-eight running. Children enjoy becoming dizzy doing this and discovering that they can regain control over themselves. Tall juice cans with ropes attached make good stilts; walking on stilts demands control of legs and arms and a sense of balance. An old crib mattress makes an excellent tumbling mat for use indoors. Balls, pails, bean-bags and blocks can all be used in creative play, and masking tape and carpet pieces, linoleum tiles and hula hoops can be used to invent many games.

Suggestions for Gross Motor Activities

Construct obstacle courses using tables, chairs, blocks, box-tunnels, mattresses and balance board. Allow children to swim across the tables, run around the chairs, crawl under and through tables, crawl through tunnels, jump over marked spaces, toss a ball into a box and walk over the "creek" on a balance beam. They need the excitement of:

- crawling: laterally or cross laterally, like a dog holding a spoon in the mouth, through a long line or circle of children standing with legs astride;
- walking with eyes closed - forward and backward;
- knocking down towers they have built for themselves (milk cartons, tins, blocks);
- throwing objects at a target;
- tearing up waste materials - paper, cardboard, rags, junk mail, styrofoam. If this material is torn into a large flat box and the children are allowed to jump up and down in it until tired, the whole box and contents can then go into the garbage container;

- jumping, rolling and burying themselves in autumn leaves;
- smashing things (in a controlled situation), e.g., blowing up old bags and popping them, jumping on paper cups and soft containers, breaking styrofoam trays. A large container should be available for the mess;
- pouring water or sand;
- trying to throw something through a tunnel;
- skipping stones on water;
- painting a fence or a wall with a large brush and clean water;
- walking on a safe fence rail or a balance beam. The children can carry items in their arms or try to balance something on the head, can walk with arms extended or by their sides, can walk backwards;
- turning somersaults or cartwheels;
- batting and chasing balloons or bubbles;

Many gymnasiums now use "dollies". Children can lie on them and "swim", sit on them and "paddle" and use them as scooters with one knee on the dolly and one foot pushing. If ready made dollies are not available, they can be made by securing ball casters to each corner of a piece of wood.

Crawling and climbing in an obstacle course exercise many muscles.

Fine Motor Coordination

Activities such as cutting, pasting, drawing, and printing bring into play fine muscles. Coordination of these fine muscles with the sense organs such as eyes and fingers must be established before the child is able to engage in such school activities as printing and writing. It is neither necessary nor desirable for a child to do much printing before coming to school. If fine muscle coordination has been achieved, most children will start to print on their own and this should be accepted as a normal activity; children who show no desire to use pencils or crayons for "writing" probably lack the necessary fine-motor coordination and should not be pushed into a too early use of these muscles. Many activities which take place in the child's normal play can be used to strengthen eye-hand coordination. Some of these activities are:

1. piling blocks. Decrease the size of blocks as coordination improves;
2. fitting puzzle pieces together;
3. using form boards and hammer blocks;

4. fitting various sizes of jar lids onto the right jar;
5. threading large beads, macaroni, empty spools. Use shoe laces with good ends or yarn taped into a firm end to make this activity easier. Later blunt needles may be introduced;
6. turning keys in locks and fitting keys into the right lock;
7. lacing shoes and opening and closing zippers (there are toys to give practice with these skills);
8. buttoning up clothes;
9. playing with stacking toys (these can be made from tins that have been opened carefully);
10. using sewing cards with large holes;
11. putting measuring sets together in the right order;
12. rolling dough and using cookie cutters;
13. using pegs and pegboard. When the child can handle pegs well, patterns may be copied;
14. placing nuts on bolts. Use a variety of sizes, but start with very large bolts;
15. hanging washers or rubber sealer rings on hook boards. Later rings can be thrown onto the hooks (a short distance at first);
16. joining dots to produce pictures of known objects;
17. placing screws into holes already made in a softwood board. Child can do this with fingers and later attempt to use a screw driver;
18. pouring or spooning sand, water, or rice into jars;
19. using plastic cups to fill plastic bottles (preferably in the yard, at bath time or on the beach);
20. dealing out cards for games;
21. playing with interlocking beads;
22. cutting fairly firm paper. (Children need help in learning to move the thumb and forefinger, and adults may need to hold the paper to keep it firm at first. In the early stages the child should be allowed to cut freely, later cutting on or between given lines;
23. playing with paper dolls and doll clothes;
24. dressing and undressing dolls;
25. pasting pictures cut from can wrappers into a scrap book labelled "fruit" or "vegetables";
26. applying felt or foam rubber pieces to a felt board;
27. placing metal or magnetized pieces onto a magnetic board;
28. rolling balls or marbles into an opening;
29. knocking down pin balls (paper tubes from foil wrap, etc. make good five-pins);
30. bouncing balls, throwing and catching balls and bean bags;
31. tossing bingo chips into an egg carton;
32. opening clothes pins and fastening them to cardboard, a paper plate or a tight line;
33. playing tiddly-winks, spill-the-beans, pick-up sticks, or other similar games;
34. playing with all kinds of fastening devices - spring lids, hooks and eyes, dome-fasteners, loose-leaf rings, old cuff-links, screw fasteners such as those on earrings;
35. playing hopscotch;
36. painting with powder or tempera paint or simply with water;
37. making prints with potatoes, scrap wood, corks or sponges and paint;
38. finger painting (use whole hand, not just finger tips);
39. winding wool or string into balls or around popsicle sticks;
40. drawing with crayons, felt pens, charcoal and chalk. Use a variety of surfaces;
41. working with plasticine, play dough, clay and papier-mache;
42. playing house (sweeping, setting table, washing, ironing, shaking dusters, washing dishes, making beds, dressing dolls, pushing carriages);
43. helping in the kitchen (butter the bread, cut the cookies, ice cookies, stir mixtures, wash vegetables, use hand juice squeezer, make sandwiches and toast, pour cereals into dishes, water plants);
44. cut inch-wide cardboard or tagboard into various lengths to make a series of strips that are 2 cm, 4 cm, etc. up to 20 cm in length. Children should arrange these in ascending or descending order. If this task seems too difficult make the strips 4 cm, 8 cm, etc. for early use. As the child's skill increases, the differences may be cut back to as little as $\frac{1}{2}$ cm;

45. putting toys away. Organize and label (with pictures) the child's room to play space so that things can be put in the proper place. Pegboards, shelves, and drawers are needed to accomplish this;
46. identifying things that don't belong in a group - the fork in the knife compartment, the sock in the jean's drawer, the can of fruit in the vegetable can area.

Activities that develop fine motor coordination.

Visual Discrimination Skills

By the time children begin to learn to read, they must be able to see the slight difference between such words as bud and bad, dig and big, bug and buy. The ability to see such fine differences develops over a long period. At age three, most children have a rather global vision and do not observe slight differences in objects; they gradually learn to distinguish gross and fine differences in color and shade. Differentiating between shapes that differ only in direction, e.g., b d, is often still difficult for a six-year-old.

As well as recognizing differences, children need to become aware of similarities. For example, they must be able to pick out identical buttons from a button bag containing a number of buttons which vary in size, number of holes, color, shape and decoration. They should also learn to see that two buttons are similar, except for one difference such as size or color. Many kindergarten games and activities require the child to group things into categories. These games contribute to the development of the more mature thinking skills children need as they become involved in learning tasks which require good visual ability.

Children need practice in describing and remembering what they have seen. Many everyday home activities can be used to develop visual discrimination and memory.

1. Sort such common objects as pot lids, plastic food containers, spoons, buttons, cards, styrofoam trays, pictures, etc.
2. Provide the child with decks of cards and with games which are designed to develop discrimination of color, shape, size, thickness, or direction.
3. Spend time talking about the pictures in a child's favorite book, e.g., find the girl in the blue dress, the child who is running, the boy wearing socks, two plates, a brown animal, a store, an apartment block, a two-storey house, a car, a bus, a truck. (This activity may also develop language strengths.)
4. Sort socks, dishes, laundry, books, records. Such activities are especially satisfying because they are purposeful, e.g., sorting cutlery into the proper sections of a drawer or placing towels in a cupboard. (Such tasks may help the child to develop an orderly, organizing mind as well as strengthen discrimination.)
5. Plan trips to see particular things. Are stop signs always the same shape? How does a yield sign differ? See all the varieties of bears in a zoo. How can you tell mummy and daddy's car from the neighbor's car?
6. Take time to window shop. Children enjoy playing "I spy" with objects on display or just talking about them, choosing the one they like best, etc.
7. Discuss cloud shapes, star patterns, vegetables on display in supermarkets. (This takes time but the colors, shapes, smells, etc., are very interesting.)
8. Help children to look carefully at how beautifully flowers and their seed pods are designed.
9. Play "looking" games from your windows.
10. Look around the house to find things made of metal, plastic, glass, wood, cloth.
11. When travelling, play games such as who can be the first to find a yellow car, a red truck, a taxi, a pink house, a flag, a church steeple, a grain elevator, a truck with a load of lumber, a man with a cane, a dairy bar.
12. Cut out pictures and then cut them in half on the slant; let the children match the pieces. (This type of game can be bought commercially.)
13. Provide the missing part in pictures of objects with one part missing - a four-toed foot, a teapot with no handle, a cat with one ear, a wagon with one wheel missing, a suitcase with no handle, a horse without a tail.
14. Put on a blindfold and ask questions such as: What is the color of your shirt, my pantsuit, the cushions on the chesterfield, the lamp shade, the flowers in the vase, your shoes, my sandals? This game may be varied by having the child point to where the clock is, the coffee table, the picture of grandma, etc.

15. Use a box of colored shapes for various games. One game can involve forming a pattern and then removing one object. Which one is gone?, e.g., red triangle, red circle, blue triangle, blue circle, yellow triangle, yellow circle. Remove any one. Or, draw a card from this box. If a yellow triangle is picked, the child should look about the room to find a yellow object, a triangular shape.
16. Imitating a succession of movements trains a child's eyes and visual memory, e.g., touch head, bang on table and scratch ankle. The child repeats these actions singly at first and then in order.
17. Using paper doll clothes, arrange four articles of clothing in any order. Gather the clothes and have the child put them in the same order. Reverse the procedure by having the child place the clothes in order and having another player put the clothes in the child's choice of order.
18. Arrange several items in a specific order. Child closes eyes while the objects are mixed up. Child places them in the original order.
19. Tear sheets of pictures from magazines or advertising materials. Cut pictures from one set of materials and have the child find the duplicates in the other set of materials.
20. Play "snap" or "go fish" with simple picture sets.
21. Show the child a simple clear picture. Count slowly to five and remove the picture. The child names all the objects that can be remembered from the picture.
22. Make use of jig saw puzzles which train visual perception. Start with large simple wooden puzzles.
23. Purchase picture sequence sets (available from educational supply houses) or make sets by cutting up old picture books. Placing cards in sequence to illustrate a simple story strengthens visual memory. Sequencing is also important in developing reading comprehension.
24. Improve the child's visual memory of shapes by handling the shapes. Triangles, squares, circles, rectangles and hexagons cut from plywood are useful in this regard; shapes cut from heavy colored tagboard are nearly as good. Two sets allow for all sorts of games involving duplication.
25. String beads or make paper chains in a given pattern to help develop sequencing ability.
26. Use magnifying glasses to explore objects in detail.
27. Collect action pictures or draw them using stick figures. Ask children to identify the actions.
28. Pantomime activities and have children identify them. Let children pantomime given activities.
29. Collect animal pictures. Let children show that they can identify the animals by making the noise, or imitating the actions of the animals.
30. Encourage the children to identify the emotions displayed in pictures, e.g., Miss Muffet running from the spider, Tom Tom the Piper's son when he was caught, Pussy-Cat when it frightened the mouse under the queen's chair.

Auditory Skills

Present-day children are bombarded by sound stimulation. Many homes have the radio and/or television turned on through most waking hours and frequently the volume of sound is much higher than is necessary or healthy. Children become so accustomed to this noise that they may be uncomfortable without it and become the chief offenders in turning up the volume. They learn to talk and even listen against it. Many children are able to block out any noise other than the program they wish to hear. This may be very annoying to parents but at least these children can separate themselves from the other sounds around them. Children who cannot do this often become irritable and confused because they cannot concentrate on only one sound stimulus. These children need quiet times and should not be exposed to high volume of radio and television when people are talking to them.

As the time for learning to read approaches, children should have help in learning to hear the sounds of the letters of the alphabet. They must be able to hear the difference between d, and b and p, v and f, and other similar sounds, and recognize rhyming sounds. Teachers provide this training in pre-reading programs but parents can help develop their child's auditory discrimination by:

reading poetry and jingles so that the child comes to enjoy and expect rhyme;

- reading nursery rhymes and expecting the child to provide the rhyming word, e.g.,
  Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall
  Humpty Dumpty had a great _____;
- playing "I spy" using the sound rather than the name of the letter. At first it might be wise to limit the choices the child has to make. Place a jug, a lemon, a jelly, a lettuce, milk and juice on the table. Ask for the "j" sound and the "l" sound. Discuss the initial sound in the word milk. Is it a "j" or an "l"? Try to find other things that start like milk;
- collecting or buying boxes of rhyming pictures and letting the child group goat, coat, boat because they do rhyme;
- saying groups of rhyming words with a non-rhyming word inserted. Can the child hear the non-rhyming word?;
- arranging groups of pictures and asking the child to pick out pictures of those objects which begin with a given sound or that rhyme with a given word;
- providing situations where the child must listen to directions and instructions;
- listening to your child and expecting the child to listen to others;
- making the whole family aware of the need to listen to each other and avoid interrupting the speaker.

V. Social Interaction and Control of Emotions

How children cope with meeting new people and situations has a direct bearing on how well they will perform at school. Children who have built up self-confidence about their own ability to learn are able to approach new learning tasks without tension. Children who lack confidence expend so much energy conquering fear and dealing with their own frustrations that they have little energy left for the learning task. Children who feel at ease in group situations and know they are accepted perform much better than children who feel uncomfortable and cannot make friends. To be rejected or ignored by a group is very painful to anyone who is only just beginning to learn how to handle social situations.

In a good preschool or kindergarten setting the teacher builds up the children's self-confidence by treating each child as an important and capable person. The teacher finds tasks each can do, praises successes, and smooths over the times when children are not so successful. The teacher provides situations where social interaction becomes easy and natural. At the same time, he or she makes the children aware that other people are important too, and that they have rights and feelings. Children learn that compromise and sharing are often necessary for happiness. Skills of cooperation are taught in subtle ways as children play together. The teacher acts as a negotiator and helps children learn to do their own negotiating. He or she shows patience and expects the child to develop into a patient, compassionate person. By demonstrating and encouraging honesty and fairness, the teacher helps children to value these qualities in themselves and others.

Opportunities to develop self-esteem and to learn to express one's own emotions should be part of each child's everyday experiences.

1. Allow children to express their feelings and turmoil but guide them to express these feelings in acceptable ways. If a child does feel resentment or jealousy toward another member of the family, it is healthy to have these feelings out in the open. Perhaps the middle child is frustrated because he or she does not feel as important as the first born or the baby and needs some special form of attention.
2. Make sure that each child really does know that he or she is loved, wanted, and accepted. It is possible to be very lonely in a family if one feels, rightly or wrongly, rejected and unable to meet parental expectations.

3. Help children to feel pride in their accomplishment when they achieve some things on their own (tying a shoelace, handling a zipper, bringing in the garden produce). Developing skills of following through and taking on some responsibility for themselves will be transferred to school learning tasks.
4. Encourage a sense of security in each child. Children who feel secure at home are more likely to dare to go into the unknown.
5. Give the child a new responsibility each month as soon as he or she is able to take on small tasks. (Bringing in the newspaper and putting it on the hall table, seeing that the spoons are on the table for each meal, changing the dish towel each evening or morning, dusting one piece of furniture, emptying upstairs wastepaper baskets on Friday).
6. Involve children in a reasonable way in planning and decision making. They should learn to look at alternatives and consider the consequences of decisions. Examples: Shall we go to the zoo or the paddling pool? What is the weather like? How much time to we have for this activity? Is cost involved? How long since we last went to the pool or the zoo? Are we able to combine this trip with anything else that must be done at the same time?
7. Set part of your day aside for a sharing time with each child. This helps the child to feel secure and important.
8. Teach sharing in early childhood; this makes sharing in the troublesome confusing teen years more likely. In the meantime the young child knows that someone cares, is ready to help, and can provide the answers that cannot be found without guidance from someone more knowledgeable and mature.
9. Teach children the common courtesies and help them practice good manners. Often social acceptance depends on knowing how to be courteous and well-mannered.
10. Allow children to bring friends home, or take the initiative by inviting children to the yard and helping with social interaction.
11. When the child comes to you with tales of injustice and bullying, check both sides of the story; the child needs sympathy and help, but not protection from the results of unsocial actions.
12. Provide for some forms of strenuous but safe activity. Build block towers to knock down, punching bags (made by stuffing vegetable sacks with rags or paper), kicking footballs inside an enclosed space and pounding clay all provide for the release of excess energy and the expression of frustration. Most children crave chances to smash things; see the suggestions made in the section on Developing Gross Motor Skills. Provide controlled areas for hammering cans or jumping on boxes or other containers. An inflexible rule that the resulting junk must be placed in the proper receptable should be established.
13. Use puppets in teaching social behavior.
14. Use dramatic play to act out other peoples' roles. This may help the child see situations from the other person's point of view, e.g., the letter carrier who falls over a child's tricycle left on the path, the harried mother or father, the lost child. Provide a box of old clothes, hats, badges, etc. to that children can engage in spontaneous dramatic play.
15. Read fables aloud. Do not preach but help children to identify with the characters. Fables can be interpreted dramatically.
16. Read children's stories that promote good mental health and contribute to emotional stability, e.g.,
    The Little Red Hen
    The Train That Could
    Silly Goose
    The Bell of Atri
17. Help the child to find pleasure in helping others, in caring for animals, and preserving or improving the environment.
18. Watch for overtiredness, hunger, or lack of fresh air in a room. When the child's needs for sleep, air, or food are not being met, emotional outbreaks occur with very little provocation.
19. Share a child's love with others. In the very early years children often are unable to learn to love more than one person at a time. It is important for them to discover, therefore, that they can love a great many people without diminishing the love they have for parents.

20. Allow children to engage in parallel play as long as this fulfills their needs. However, continue to provide playmates so that eventually, children will begin to share their interests and activities with peers.
21. Help children face up to the realities of life. They must learn that they cannot have unlimited freedom to have and do anything they desire. Laws, rules, morals and customs are necessary to a well-functioning society. Children learn this best in a loving home with parents who are, themselves, socially acceptable people.
22. Bring children up to know that they must be ready to accept responsibility if they are to have privileges. A child who wants a pet should share the responsibility for caring for that pet. Children who have friends in the home must share the hosting and the tidying.
23. Be firm but loving, in disciplining children. Give children an explanation when rules are imposed; older children may even be able to help formulate the rule. Children are usually happier when they know the acceptable limits of their behavior.
24. Be consistent in discipline. Criticize the act, not the child. Don't reject a child following punishment.

In using any of the activities suggested in this chapter, it should be remembered, as has been stated many times already in this publication, that children learn best through play, their natural way of learning. Children become very absorbed and serious about their play and in so doing use their own thought processes and integrate new knowledge. Skills learned through force-teaching are often not integrated into the child's daily activities whereas skills such as counting and sorting, achieved while at play, become functional. The results of formal early training are short-lived, but the skills and knowledge the child learns through play, are learned at his or her level of understanding and are likely to be long-lasting.

Avoid pushing children before they are developmentally ready. When parents expect too much, the child loses confidence and resists new activities. Thinking skills and language skills should develop through non-threatening, enjoyable home experiences, not from pressure to produce to please adults.

Additional sections of this sourcebook noted below may also be of interest to parents. Copies of these sections could be duplicated for parent use.

- Who Comes to Kindergarten - Chapter Four, pp. 20-22.
- References for Parents or Adults Interested in Constructing Adventure Playgrounds - Chapter Four, p. 45.
- Books for Children - Chapter Four, pp. 46-53.
- Need to Teach Social Behaviors - Chapter Four, pp. 32, 33.
- Partnership with Parents - Chapter Six, pp. 134, 135.

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Chapter Eight
Helping Teachers Accommodate Handicapped Children

I. General Statement of Philosophy

Since early intervention for the purposes of prevention and amelioration is advisable for children with special needs, these children should be placed in the regular kindergarten and primary programs wherever possible. Not only do these children profit from the educational opportunities available but, since younger children tend to accept more readily children who "are different", integration usually presents fewer problems at this early stage than later. However, if their needs cannot be met in classes shared with their peers, then special program planning may be necessary and these plans should be implemented as early as possible.

School systems are expanding their services to include educational psychologists, speech and hearing clinicians, and reading clinicians who will work with teachers to overcome problems which impede and disrupt the normal learning process. Causes of difficulties are complex and varied - perceptual, psychological, social and physical - and must be determined before an effective educational program, geared to the individual child, can be developed. Assistance in planning programs and developing materials is also available from special education teachers and consultants.

Do not dwell on children's limitations but on their possibilities.

Visually Impaired Children

Visually impaired children need the concrete experiences which a well planned kindergarten program provides. They need to feel capable of joining in with almost all activities and to feel accepted by their peers. Often totally-blind children are enrolled in kindergarten. The sighted children come to accept blind children as just other persons like themselves. They discover that these children are able to take part in many of the activities that sighted children enjoy. Blind children will require special instruction in braille, but this will probably not be given in kindergarten. The teacher of a blind child should contact the Department of Education, Child Development and Support Services, 1181 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 0T3. The teacher may be placed in contact with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in the nearest city. Field workers are able to advise about special toys and equipment and can often secure them for school use. Teachers of the visually impaired child need guidance from the child's doctor or public health nurse about the degree of vision which the child retains, what special care can be taken to prevent further deterioration, and how best to compensate for the child's loss of sight.

A visually impaired child working with the resource teacher.

Hearing Impaired Children

Children with a hearing loss sometimes come to kindergarten wearing hearing aids. The noise level may be higher than at home and sounds will come from several directions simultaneously, causing static and muffling of reception on the hearing aid. The child may become frustrated and turn off the equipment to avoid the confusion. Teachers and hard-of-hearing children need help in learning to use hearing aids in this new situation. The child may react by being confused, aggressive, or withdrawn. Teachers should be made aware of ways and means of increasing the child's ability to cope with his or her handicap and to feel comfortable in the classroom setting.

Children who have never heard at all often have very limited speech. Such children require concentrated help from support persons who will teach them to lip read or to use sign language. At a very early age, even before nursery school age, most totally deaf children profit from the services of a person who is specially trained in dealing with this impairment. The decision about whether a special placement would serve a child better than being placed in the regular classroom should be taken in consultation with the Department of Education Child Development and Support Services and the local health unit. The Society for Crippled Children and Adults is ready to give help and advise about securing special equipment if this is needed.

Teachers may find that some children in their classrooms have a hearing loss which has not been detected. Sometimes childhood diseases leave a child with limited hearing. The child is not aware of this loss but the teacher may notice that he or she turns one ear toward a speaker, and hears sometimes but not at other times. Children who complain of earache or who have running ears should always be referred to the school nurse.

All children in kindergarten should be screened for hearing losses. The degree of hearing impairment and procedures for correction should be known before the child tries to learn to read. If the deafness cannot be cured, at least it will be known that the child must be taught by a method which relies largely on visual and motor learning. A child without any perceptual impairment learns to read by attaching visual symbols to the speaking vocabulary he or she already possesses. The deaf child can see the symbols but needs skilled help in attaching sound to these symbols. The oral vocabulary of a hearing impaired child usually improves remarkably, once the translation skills have been mastered.

Slower Learning Children

Slower learners who are normal with respect to physical, social, and emotional development can readily be accommodated in kindergarten and many profit from a second year there. In the first year, the child is likely to operate at an early four-year level and to seek out parallel play activities and is likely to improve in language ability because of the stimulation received. In the second year, the child may enjoy some of the less complex tasks in the learning activity-centres. Care must be taken to see that children with a four-year mental age are not forced into activities designed for the five- and six-year old. Where it is suspected that the child's intellectual maturity is well below most of those in the class, the teacher should have that child tested. A child who is only four years of age mentally may resist group play but enjoy parallel play, and will be most unhappy if forced into activities for which he or she does not yet have the capacity. Teachers should be frank with parents about how the child operates. They should ask parents to note sudden bursts of development if they occur. Sometimes, what appears to be slowness is emotional insecurity.

Children whose rate of maturing is slow will have certain problems in language development. They are slow to express themselves and often do not understand instructions and questions. In observing these young children, the teacher can often learn more from their movements, gestures, and facial expressions than from their speech. Sometimes, what a child does not say is more revealing than what that child does say.

Educable and Trainable Children

Early detection is necessary if these children are to be given programs which can help them. When placed in a situation where the demands made upon them are unrealistic, most retarded children exhibit behavior problems. A trainable retarded child who is able to play with peers and is not aggressive or threatening can gain much from a year in kindergarten. However, most severely retarded children are happier in a room with low enrollment and a teacher especially trained to give them the program they need.

In schools where young retarded children are placed in a special class, the kindergarten teacher can often accommodate them for part of the day. The handicapped child will benefit from the participation and the children who interact with a handicapped child gain a better understanding of that child as a person. Teachers who have contact with retarded children should obtain a copy of Administrative Guide for Classes of Educable Mentally Handicapped Children from the Curriculum Development Branch, Department of Education, 1181 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 0T3.

Emotionally Disturbed and Hyperactive Children

There are so many degrees of emotional disturbance that it is difficult to decide which disturbed children are able to function well enough to profit from a regular preschool program. Some of these children have to be referred to the appropriate agencies and given special programs until they become stable enough to relate to a kindergarten or primary group. A careful study of the disturbed child's problems should be made by qualified people before the child is accepted into kindergarten.

In making a decision about accepting an emotionally disturbed child into a regular classroom, there are two important questions to answer. The first is whether the teacher is able to handle both this particular child and the remainder of the class in such a way that the regular children are not physically or emotionally hurt by the disturbed child. At times, emotionally disturbed children totally disregard the rights of others and are both destructive and disruptive. They may create an atmosphere that threatens and confuses all the other children to the point where no one enjoys the school experience. If it is not possible to get the emotionally disturbed child to adjust reasonably well in a short time, the child should be excluded for at least a month until the teacher can restore the confidence of the remaining children. In this month, a further study of the disturbed child's problem should be undertaken. The teacher should be involved in the planning for this child. However, all teachers will have their own limits for acceptable behavior. These should be discussed with the psychologist or the social worker or the nurse who is handling the case and with the parents of the child. A decision should be made when the study is completed.

The other question to be considered is whether the kindergarten program is the best one for the emotionally disturbed child. In most cases, the free play, the physical activity, and the happy atmosphere are good for the child who is suffering from stress and conflict. If this child can be made to feel wanted, and if the child senses that he or she is in a non-threatening situation, conflicts may begin to be resolved in socially acceptable ways and the child becomes much happier.

Some children may require more than a skilled, understanding teacher and a cooperative group of children to effect a change. The child may need psychiatric help. The psychiatrist could advise about preschool attendance for such children; part-time attendance until such time as adjustment takes place might be recommended.

Many seriously emotionally disturbed children are hyperactive. Some may act without considering the consequences of their actions and often show intense and irrational fears. Others are extremely quiet, withdraw from groups, and may day-dream or fantasize. The hyperactive child may bully, intrude on other children's groups, destroy equipment, disrupt activities, and fight or cry excessively. The child is, of course, acting out personal unhappiness and seeking help and attention. The behavior of such children is extremely difficult to cope with. The following techniques may help:

1. Remember that the likelihood of a pattern of behavior being repeated depends on the reinforcement given to that behavior. If a child screams and gets what he or she wants, that child is likely to continue to use screaming as a means of getting what is wanted. However, if screaming fails, another method may be tried such as asking pleasantly. Or, the child may decide to accept another alternative. When the reaction is a socially acceptable one, it should be reinforced immediately. Teachers who are able to reinforce the positive and resist reinforcing the negative are usually successful in effecting desired change.

When a child throws a tantrum, that child has no control of his or her actions. The child should be removed from the classroom and left to finish the tantrum if it can be done without damaging him/herself. The tantrum should not result in the child's getting his or her own way. The teacher should try not to appear upset as this reaction may provide the reinforcement the child wants.

When a tantrum is in full spate, it is unlikely that appeal to common sense or the use of a logical argument will have any effect. When the crisis is over, the child should be helped to get back into the play group. The teacher should not give in to the tantrum, not even if the audience is somewhat sympathetic, although, if a child threw a tantrum to get exclusive possession of a new toy, the teacher could provide a card to show that this child has the right to claim the toy, tomorrow, but not today.

Reinforcement should be given for every change of behavior which is moving the child in the right direction, e.g., Sally hangs up her painting shirt but throws another child's shirt onto the ground. Try, "Sally, I'm really happy to see you put your shirt in the right place. Will you pick up that other one? Do you know who owns it? Please put it in the right place." If this works, reinforce it.

2. Behavior modification programs which provide rewards for desirable behavior may be useful in changing the behavior of particular children. The child is involved in knowing what behavior changes are sought and what rewards can be expected for certain behavior. The teacher structures the child's environment in an attempt to provide an opportunity for desirable behavior to occur and consistently reinforces as promised. Initially, rewards may be extrinsic, such as tokens or points. If the child genuinely does desire the teacher's approval, social reinforcements such as a smile, a handshake or commendation may be enough. The child eventually is motivated by the intrinsic reward of doing something for the satisfaction of it and his or her own concept of what is acceptable behavior.

3. Try to avoid an unconscious reinforcement for undesirable behavior. Work for behavior change but try not to punish. However, there are situations where punishment may be necessary for the child's own protection. Punishment for crossing a dangerous highway may keep the child off it, especially if the teacher is normally non-punitive and explains the danger. Punishment may act as a negative reinforcement, but more frequently punishment only suppresses the unwanted behavior until another time and place make it possible for the offender to get his or her own way. Try not to be specific about a punishment which might be applied, given a certain provocation. Circumstances can alter the approach and one should not appear inconsistent when actually one is being judicious.

4. Frequent reinforcement should take place when new behavior is being learned. Later, a staggered program of reinforcement will protect the learning.

5. Children are usually happier and more secure when reasonable limits are set for them and they know what these limits are. There are, unfortunately, children who have had few limits set for them before they come to school. It requires patience and perseverence to help such children adapt to the group and to accept the rules set out for it. The teacher should also think in terms of prevention and try to anticipate a child's actions, adjusting the environment in order to encourage acceptable behavior.

A Note on the Hyperactive Child

The most reliable technique for handling hyperactivity is the prevention of escalation by the defusing of the situation. If hyperactivity has accelerated, the child must be isolated so that he or she and those affected by the behavior have a chance to recover. Neither punishment nor behavior modification is effective in helping the extremely hyperactive child. Not enough is known about how to help these children and their parents. In some cases, prescribed drugs and dietary control appear to help, at least temporarily, but more research is needed before these treatments can be recommended.

Conclusion

All children with special needs should have the advantages of learning and associating with their peers whenever possible. All children should learn to include in their own group others who have problems of physical, mental, or emotional disabilities.

School administrators must be aware that every special child placed in a preschool has particular needs which must be met. Such children make demands on the teacher's resourcefulness and energy and may require a disproportionate share of his or her time. They often require, in addition, special equipment and resource materials. The presence of even one emotionally disturbed child might make it necessary to have an aide in the classroom.

Parents of handicapped children know that such a child, no matter how accepting and empathetic the family is, drains the physical and emotional resources of those people who provide that child's daily care. The mother, since in most cases it is she who is at home with the child, may need whole days off or hours off during the day. Often kindergarten attendance is seen as the means of providing this relief. However, if the tensions and strains are passed on to the kindergarten teacher who already has many other children who need and demand his or her strength and time, the burden of the extra child or children may be unfair to all concerned, including the special child. As an alternative, volunteer programs for small groups of handicapped and/or disturbed children can provide a happy program for all concerned, e.g., the program operated by The Children's Aid Society of Western Manitoba during the summer of 1977 in The Maples Group Home, Winnipeg.

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Chapter Nine
Entering the Primary Years: Meeting the Needs of Children at Different Stages of Development

I. Entering Primary One

When children leave kindergarten and enter Primary One, many will have reached Stage C (the mature six-year old and immature seven-year old), but some will still be in Stage B (the maturing five-year old and/or the immature six-year old). The children who are developmentally in Stage B when they come into Primary One are generally called the Readiness Group; such children need an intermediate stage of learning between kindergarten and the Primary One program. They need further development of social, physical, and cognitive skills and should develop these skills through handling concrete materials; they need to become secure in the language of instruction. If the expectations of skill-building are realistic, these children will experience success in learning and will become secure emotionally.

Children in the readiness classes should be regarded as a group legitimately involved in the significant process of building basic skills. There is ample evidence to show that there are benefits for the less mature primary age child in a good pre-primary program that respects the child's maturational growth.

Teachers who choose to work with these particular children should have abundant patience and the ability to work without conveying a sense of urgency. They must have the sensitivity to assess accurately the learning strengths and weaknesses of the children and the resourcefulness to develop suitable teaching techniques. A few additional productive months will enable most children to achieve particular learning goals.

The children in the readiness groups should not be regarded or labelled as problem children, but without appropriate program decisions and skillful teaching, social, emotional, and academic problems can develop. Experiencing failure or rejection at this stage can cause permanent damage. Administrators have a responsibility to arrange for program pacing and the grouping of readiness children in classrooms where enrollment is low. At this stage, a skillful teacher can guide these children to become happy, confident learners. The developmental approach is a much healthier one than an approach which attempts to provide remediation after children have had damaging school experiences featuring failure and disappointment.

Guidelines for a readiness program are suggested in this chapter in the section entitled "Suggested guidelines for kindergarten/grade one transition".

II. Stage C Program Suggestions

At differing rates, children in this stage can generally handle what is sometimes called the formal Primary One program. If the word "formal" suggests connotations of regimentation, fixed timetables and children who are quiet, immobile and perhaps apprehensive, that should be changed! The objectives of the formal Primary One program must be accomplished by informal flexible means. These children need to react with each other and to take responsibility for some of their own learning. They must have the time and facilities to be creative. There must be considerable individualization and small group work. Even though all the children in one average sized class could be considered to be in Stage C of their development, it is inconceivable that all the children will have reached the same level of competence in any particular learning goal. Those children whose development is rapid must be challenged through planned learning activities that build on and extend experience and present skills. In order to maximize the potential for student growth, the program must include tasks that are realistic and appropriate for each child.

Children who have reached Stage C are generally ready to follow the programs for grade one outlined in the provincial curriculum guides. Play is still seen as a way to learn and is related to real and serious work. The teacher should consider the learning goals outlined in these curricula and develop a program to meet goals realistic for the particular children in a class. There is considerable freedom within the framework of the curriculum guides for teachers to develop appropriate classroom methods for arriving at these goals and to select materials which both support their teaching strategies and are suited to the needs and interests of particular children. For their part, administrators need to cooperate to provide what is best for children even at the risk of some administrative inconvenience. For example, it is obviously more difficult to order, store, catalogue, and maintain a number of reading series than to impose one primary series on a whole school division.

Play is still seen as a way to learn.

For children in Group C, there will be periods of concentration on developmental tasks aimed at promoting the communication skills of reading and of self-expression through writing. In mathematics, the child should progress according to his or her own pattern of maturity, moving from the concrete to the semi-concrete and eventually to the abstract in number.

Not since the tasks of learning to walk and talk were accomplished has the young child felt as pleased and confident as when he or she becomes a beginning reader, a novice writer, and a mini-mathematician. This is a time when the child can develop pride in doing tasks well and in organizing routines, and reaching for personal excellence can become a life-long goal.

> The goal of developing a positive attitude toward school and learning should have high priority in the primary school.

In the excitement of witnessing and sharing academic achievement, the teacher of Group C children must remember that they are still very young. They continue to need mobility and freedom from pressure, the accepted characteristics of a kindergarten program. Learning should not be compartmentalized; painting, drama, physical activities, and music should be integrated with social studies, science, and mathematics.

A. Language Arts

Consult the following curriculum guides and references available from the Manitoba Department of Education:

- Language Arts Curriculum Guide;
- Language Arts Skills K-12 Flow Chart (Goals feasible for 5-8 year olds); and
- Assessment of Approved Reading Series

Oral Language

The development of oral language should receive priority. The child may have language skills adequate for beginning reading, but once the initial skills of word recognition have been learned and the child is reading independently, further growth will depend on the ability to comprehend what is read. If the Primary One or Two child reaches a stage where there is little comprehension of what is read because concepts of language are meaningless, reading growth usually tapers off. But while in the stage where concentration on using word recognition skills is still required, the child cannot comprehend what is read unless his or her oral language skills are sufficiently developed to assure that what is printed would have as personal a meaning as if it had been spoken. The causes of a child's stopping or tapering off his or her reading are often found to be the lack of vocabulary, or the inability to handle a more sophisticated sentence structure or new organizational patterns. At this stage, wide reading can contribute to improving both the vocabulary and the understanding of sentence structure for these readers.

Concrete Experience

To the child at the Stage C level, many words will be meaningless unless they are defined in terms of concrete experiences; from the understanding of the concrete, the child can then move to the understanding of concepts. For example, by participating in making peanut butter, the child will begin to understand the meaning of, among others, the words grinding, smooth, crunchy, thick, blend. The child will then be able to apply the understanding of concrete experiences to the formation of abstract concepts.

Framing Questions

To be able to ask questions is a valuable learning skill at this stage where curiosity is at a peak. Children need to learn to use clauses beginning with, "How", "What", "Where", "Why", "When", and "If". Adults who talk with them and use simple, well constructed sentences offer children useful models which they can adopt and use. Children's questions can give valuable clues to the level of their thinking.

Early Use of Manuscript Handwriting

In some published reading series, a major emphasis is placed on the child's learning to print and spell the words carefully and accurately when learning to read them. The success of some of these reading-writing methods indicates that there are some advantages to be gained in planning programs that include an early teaching of manuscript handwriting (printing) and the encouraging of the child to use this skill in personal story writing and list making. Materials on the approved Manitoba textbook listing include reading series which emphasize learning to print the letters; these series recommend that children should start "writing stories" at an early stage but do not recommend the teaching of reading through spelling.

If manuscript handwriting is to contribute to success in teaching reading, the quality of the printed script must be high, as poor printing can interfere with the learning of word recognition skills. For example, children who see the word should in their readers and reproduce it as ShOUL∂ on paper are making word recognition difficult for themselves.

It has been observed that children who have word recognition problems and who require help from a resource teacher often exhibit very slipshod printing. They have not learned consistent ways of shaping their letters and disregard the relative size and position of these letters. Problems in reading and printing could both spring from the same cause. They could, for instance, be related to a visual perception handicap; however, when resource teachers reteach printing and use a multi-media approach to learning to recognize words, there is usually a very real improvement in reading. The fact that a child has had time to mature physically since the initial instruction may also be a significant factor in improving both writing and reading.

Most children can learn to print well, to group letters closely in words, and to provide reasonable spacing between words. In spite of the fact that manuscript handwriting will be replaced by cursive writing eventually, it should be taught well and children should be expected to maintain an acceptable standard unless they are physically unable to do so. Instruction in holding the writing tool and in using arm movement is valuable. Because printing tends to cramp arm movements, teachers sometimes plan "scribbling" exercises to maintain the skills needed for cursive writing.

Activities that Prepare Children for Reading

The Primary One teacher must decide which children are ready for reading and which children need a longer readiness period. If children have been in a public school kindergarten, the kindergarten teacher may have indicated which children have reached Stage B developmentally and which are in Stage C. Helpful as these opinions may be, the Primary One teacher is responsible for making decisions for grouping of the children in the class. Because children mature and develop over the summer, receiving teachers must determine appropriate programs for specific children, and groupings should be flexible. The purpose of grouping is usually to provide some specific short term instruction and the group should disband when this purpose has been achieved. These children who are known to be ready for reading should be placed immediately into a reading program. The pace of the program should be carefully controlled until the teacher has determined grouping and program procedures, and it should be expected that some children may have been incorrectly placed. Both the non-reading and the reading groups should participate in activities which build language and concepts. The introductory activities offer valuable language development opportunities even though some children may not be at the "learning-to-read" stage.

In assessing readiness, the teacher can get help and suggestions from the Department of Education Curriculum Guides and from the teacher guidebooks that are part of the various "reading series" materials. If reading readiness tests[1] are to be administered, it is suggested that teachers wait for at least two weeks after the beginning of classes so that children have had time to settle in and to recall and practice some of the skills already developed. Though reading readiness skills check lists can provide a skill profile reflecting some skill stages, no teacher should wait until a child has mastered every skill on that list before teaching reading. Critical conditions related to visual discrimination, fluency in language of instruction, auditory discrimination, physical development, social and emotional maturity must be met before a child can be expected to read.

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1. A list of suggested reading readiness tests can be found in Appendix 3, page 203.

Visual Discrimination

Children must be able to see likenesses and differences in letters and words. If they are able to name most of the letters of the alphabet (not necessarily in order) and know a few sight words, they have demonstrated that their visual discrimination skills are sufficient for at least the beginning stages of reading. Some children may not know any letters or words, simply because there has never been any need or opportunity to learn them. These children require activities involving pictorial symbols where the likenesses and differences are very obvious. After demonstrating the ability to distinguish between symbols with obvious gross differences, children can comfortably progress toward making finer discriminations. The child must have reached a stage of maturity that allows seeing a relationship between a concrete object and a visual word symbol representing that object before he or she can learn to read written materials.

Children should be exposed to differences in shape, position, and size. When identifying "like" shapes presents no problems, letters and then words should be introduced. Commercial tests for visual discrimination are available but many teachers construct their own, the use of universal norms not being required. These tests are used to provide a rough estimation of readiness and a diagnosis of how sharply the child discriminates and what kinds of discrimination training is needed. If a child's visual acuity is weak, he or she is not ready to start to learn to read by any method which begins with word recognition by configuration clues.

Once children have had sufficient experience in finding likenesses and differences using concrete objects, the following types of exercises may be provided to develop discrimination using symbols:[2]

. Likenesses obvious;
. Difference in direction;
. Reproduction of like shapes;
. Differences in shape and direction;
. Groups of objects that are alike;
. Groups of letters that are alike;
. Words that are alike;
. Diagnostic review.

Likenesses-Gross Discrimination (p.166)

Children are shown where to cut so that row four is cut into four separate pictures. These pictures should be placed or pasted in the appropriate rows.

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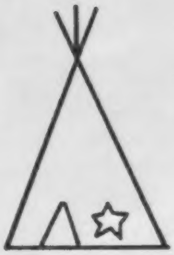
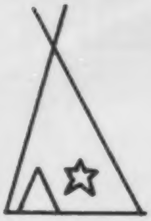
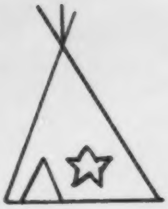
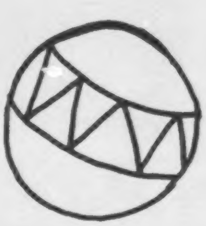
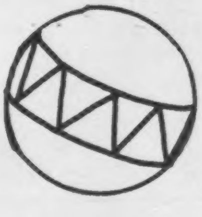
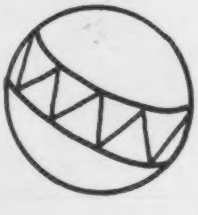
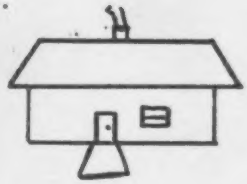
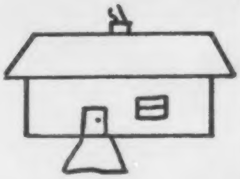
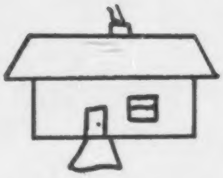
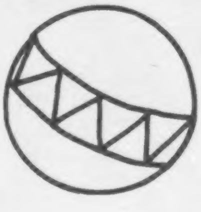
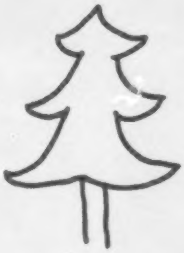
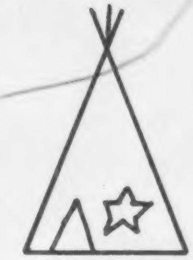
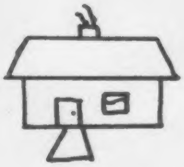
[2] Additional exercises can be found in Chapter Six, pages 129-131.

LIKENESSES

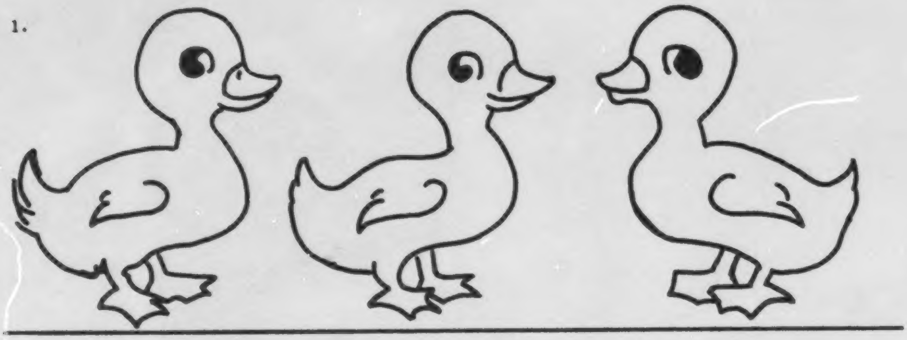
1. 			
2. 			
3. 			
CUT HERE 4. 			

Difference in direction

Place a cardboard placekeeper under Row 1. Have the children decide which two ducks are facing the same way. Place a marker on the one that is not going in the same direction as the other two.

Row 2 and 3 - same.

1.



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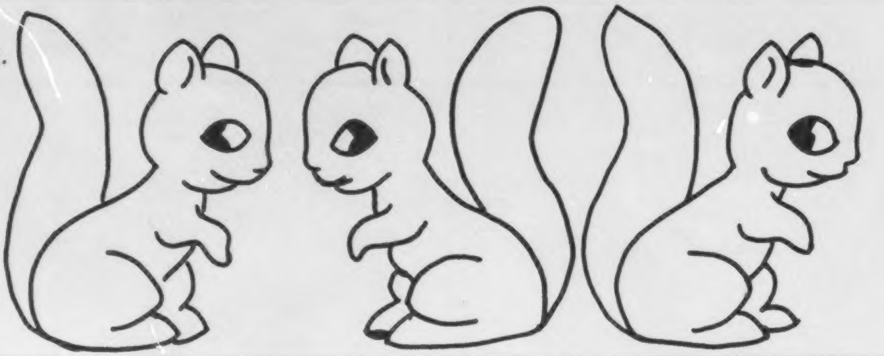

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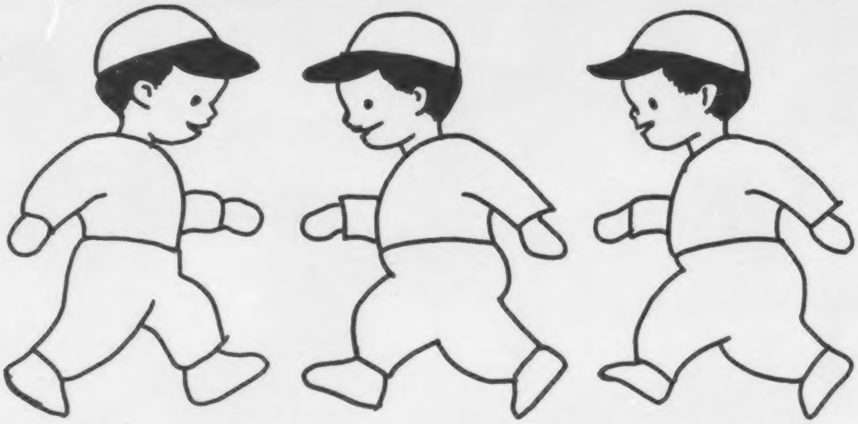
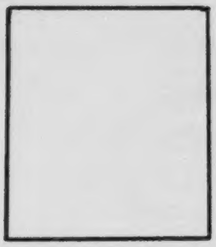
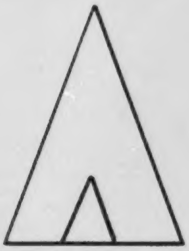
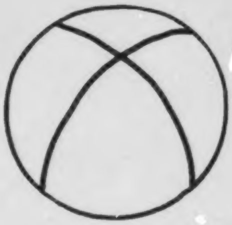
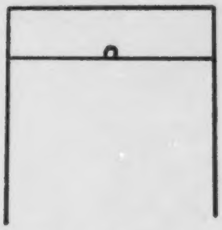
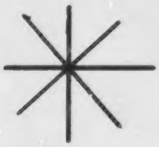


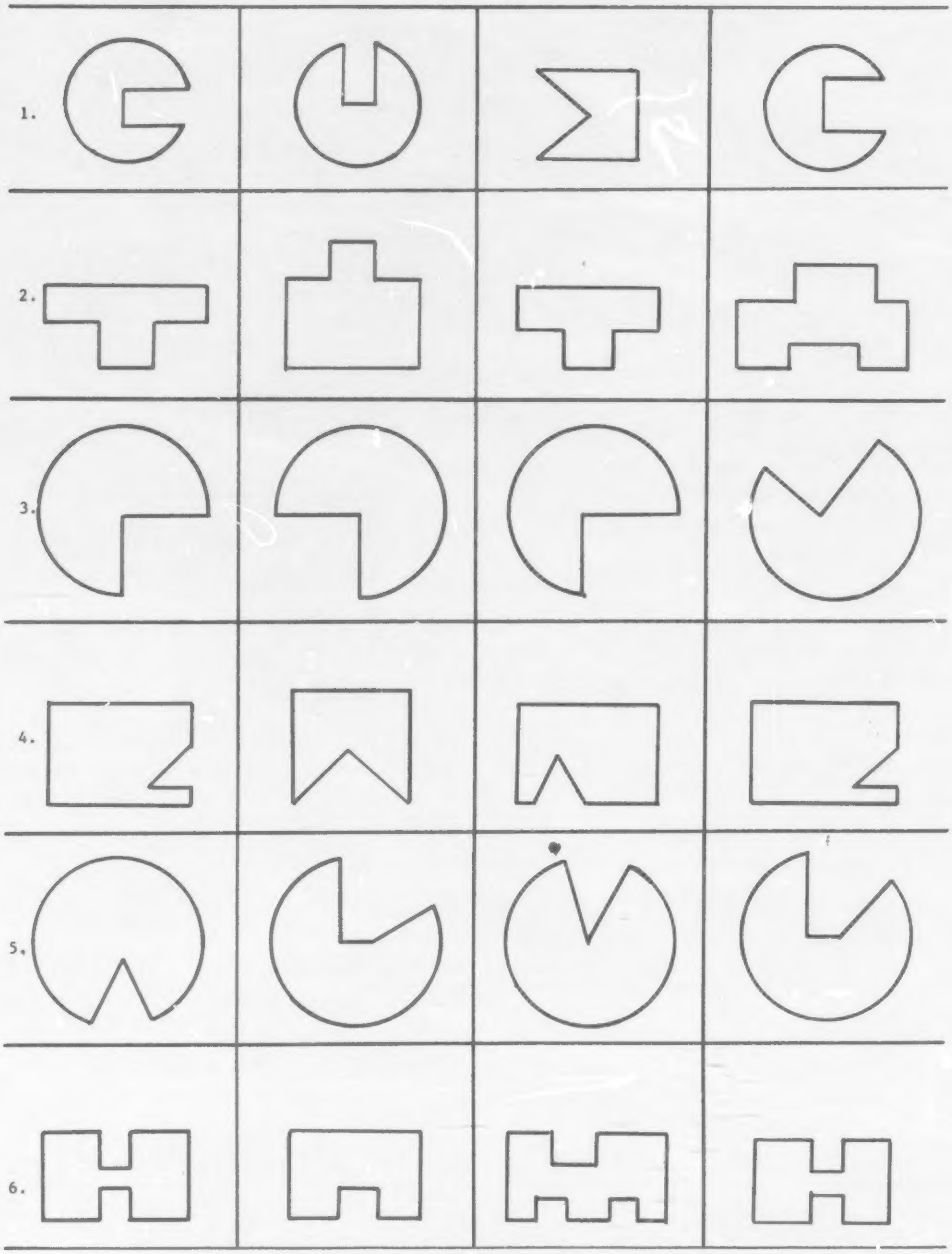
Reproduction of the shape

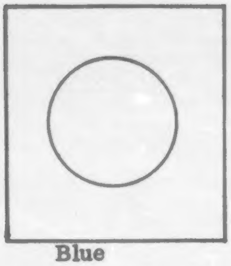
Children use crayons to complete the row by repeating the shape which they see in the first space in each row.

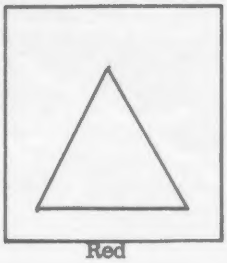
			
			
			
			
			

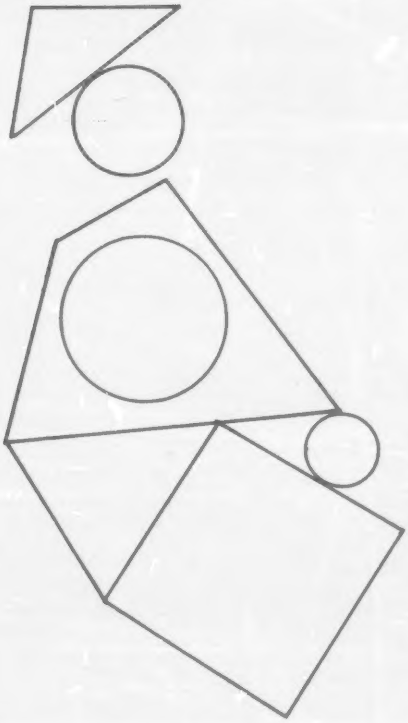
Differences in shape and direction

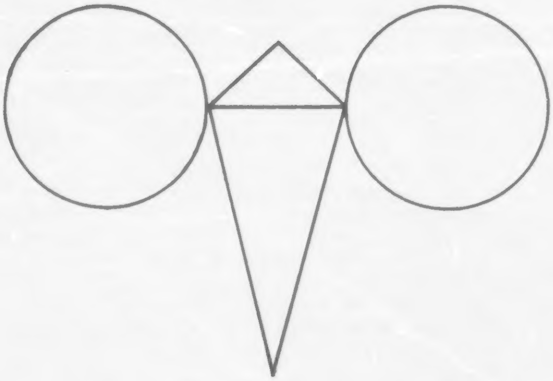
Use cardboard "placekeeper" under Row 1. Have children decide which two shapes in Row 1 are exactly the same. Indicate these by placing markers on the two that are the same.

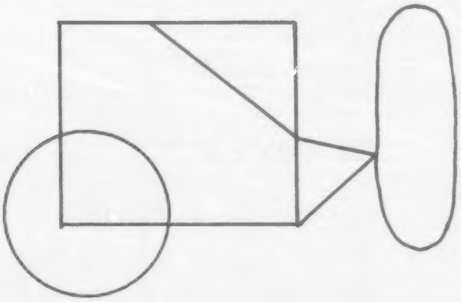



Blue


Red







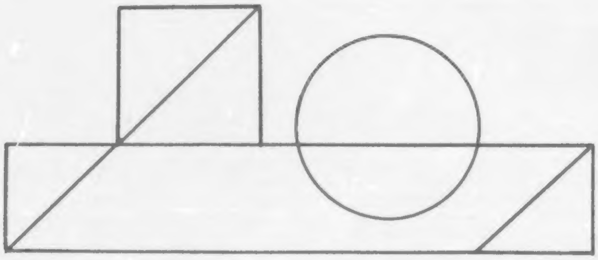
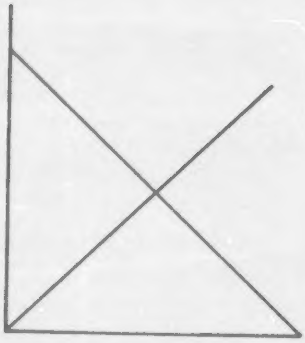


Figure-Ground Perception

Outline ○'s in blue and △'s in red

Complete the picture in Row 2 to match the picture in Row 1

1.



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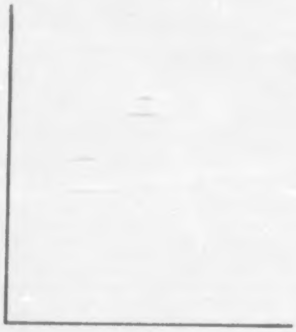
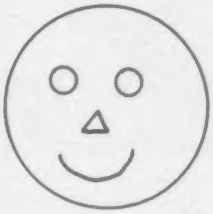
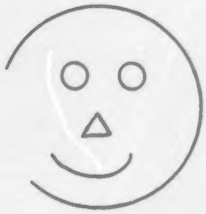
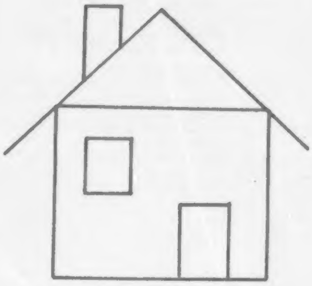
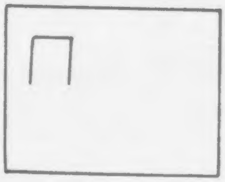
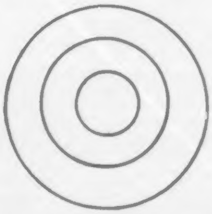


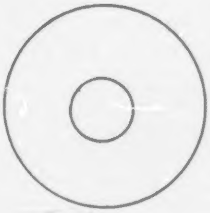






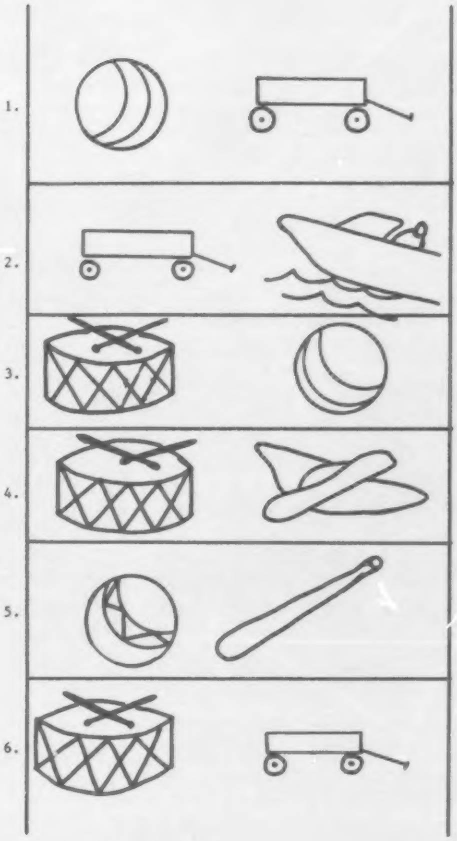


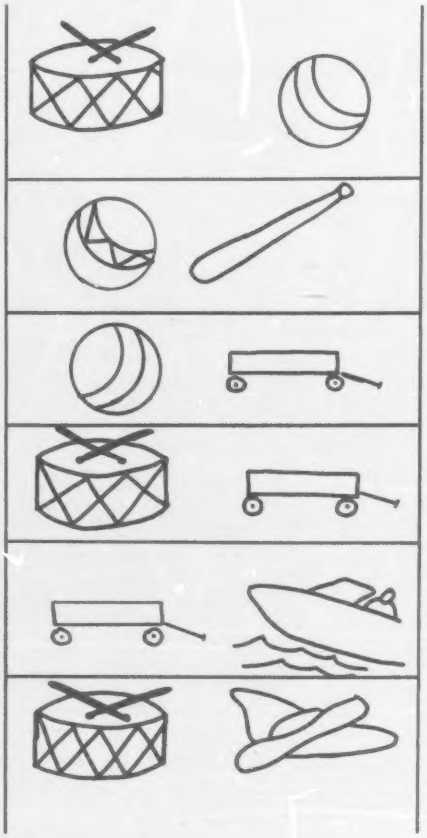




Groups of objects that are alike

Using Row A and a placekeeper look at box 1. Find a box in Row B that contains exactly the same objects in the same order. Draw a line from box 1 in Row A to the corresponding box in Row B. Repeat with boxes 2-6.





Groups of letters that are alike

Using a placekeeper under Row 1, look carefully at the first symbol. There is one symbol in the remainder of the row which is exactly the same as this first one. Place a marker on it.

1.	is	si	is	si
2.	he	he	eh	he
3.	on	no	on	no
4.	my	my	my	ym
5.	at	ta	ta	at
6.	us	us	su	us
7.	if	if	if	fi
8.	go	og	go	go
9.	up	up	up	pu

Words that are alike

Cut along the dotted lines. Place identical words side-by-side.

up	so
is	at
my	up
at	he
so	is
he	my

we	on
by	to
us	we
on	if
if	by
to	us

Diagnostic review

When children cannot match word forms it may be because they are looking at the word from the wrong end (reversal). The child looks at fol but carries a mental picture of lof or even and, therefore, chooses the reversed shapes in section one. It is important for the teacher to recognize this type c. vision if it exists.

Some children form the habit of skipping over the beginning or ending letters. This can be detected by using sections 2 and 3 of the following test having children put markers on the symbol which matches the first one in each row.

Complete Reversal	fol	lof	lof	fol	fol	1.
	rin	nir	rin	nir	nir	2.
	pog	gop	gop	gop	pog	3.
	boad	daob	boad	boad	daob	4.
Initial Differences	fer	ter	ker	fer	der	5.
	muc	muc	nuc	ruc	muc	6.
	disd	hisd	disd	bisd	kisd	7.
	golp	yolp	polp	qolp	golp	8.
Final Differences	wuh	wut	wuh	wun	wuh	9.
	kea	kec	keo	kea	kee	10.
	frlg	friy	frig	frip	friq	11.
	smob	smop	smoh	smob	smod	12.

Fluency in the Language of Instruction

Children who are not proficient in oral language should have opportunities to build language skills before they can be expected to learn to read. Teaching reading is unrealistic and seldom successful unless the child knows the language well. Anyone for whom the language of instruction is a second language, therefore, needs time to become comfortably fluent and to be able to think in the new language.

Many publishers recognize that all children need to be comfortable with the vocabulary and concepts used in early reading and, therefore, produce the ancillary materials needed to develop the language and understanding needed for particular reading selections. Primary teachers who have children with language disabilities should obtain these charts, teaching aids, and games that support specific language growth; worksheets are an inadequate solution to the problem of developing language skills.

Students who have limited oral ability, but who are being given concentrated instruction in language, can safely begin reading if the language experience approach is used. In this approach, early reading materials are developed from the child's own oral language. This material presents no comprehension difficulty and word attack skills are developed using the child's vocabulary and sentence structure. Teachers who wish to do further reading about this approach are referred to the Language section of the bibliography at the end of this chapter.

Promoting Language Development

Language development is another phase of intellectual growth. A command of oral language is only one step removed from the child's world of auditory symbols. Because of the close relation between vocabulary and reading success, primary teachers must consider language instruction as one of their most important jobs.

Language readiness can be promoted by many simple means:

- using words in the classroom which will expand the child's stock of meanings and concepts;
- reading stories often and taking time to talk about words in the story that may need interpretation;
- encouraging children to bring to the classroom objects of interest that will help to stimulate the conversation and build vocabularies;
- planning simple trips to places of interest in the school community; children should be involved in the planning;
- giving children an opportunity to talk about what they see, hear, taste, smell and feel - to exchange ideas, and to record their experiences in chart form;
- using description, riddles, rhyme, and puzzle games that will develop the children's ability to use words;
- making good use of the bulletin board, the chalkboard, and of signs and labels;
- using such teaching aids as records, tape recorders, and filmstrips to help expand concepts;
- using dramatization, marionette, and puppet shows.

PLAY THEATER

Producing puppet shows gives children opportunities to use words imaginatively.

Auditory Discrimination[3]

Before children are able to make use of letter-sound relationships in learning to read, they must have developed the ability to discriminate between sounds. Children who can hear that dog, duck, and daisy all start with the same sound and that dog, log, and fog rhyme, are capable of using consonant substitution in word attack. A teacher who finds that these skills must be developed needs many objects for children to handle and discuss. Pictures of noun words are useful as well.

Such concrete objects as a jug, jelly-powder, a jack-o-lantern, jar, jam, juice can, are readily procurable for handling when teaching the letter "J". In addition, such objects as pencil, tomato, milk, doll, and book, will be needed if children are to be asked to separate objects that start with the sound of "J". This exercise should emphasize the oral; children should name each object as it is identified.

After using concrete objects, pictures of such things as jeep, jar, jacket, jet, jack-o-lantern, jacks, juggler, judge, should be used. Children can practice saying the words that these pictures represent and listening carefully to the "J" sound. These pictures can be mixed with other pictures in the sets. Then all the "J" cards can be located and grouped again. These same card sets can have rhyming word pictures. Pictures of a coat, log, boat, goat and house can be used to help children hear rhyme.

Children who are ready to use sounds in beginning reading also need help in blending sounds and relating them to the printed words. Games give valuable practice. A teacher can pronounce a word slowly but smoothly, and let children identify what was said.

Example: Breathe out softly in one long breath the letters j - a - m. The children repeat what they hear and then say the word normally. Avoid adding "uh" to the consonants as they are elongated. "Juh--a--muh" does not sound like Jam.

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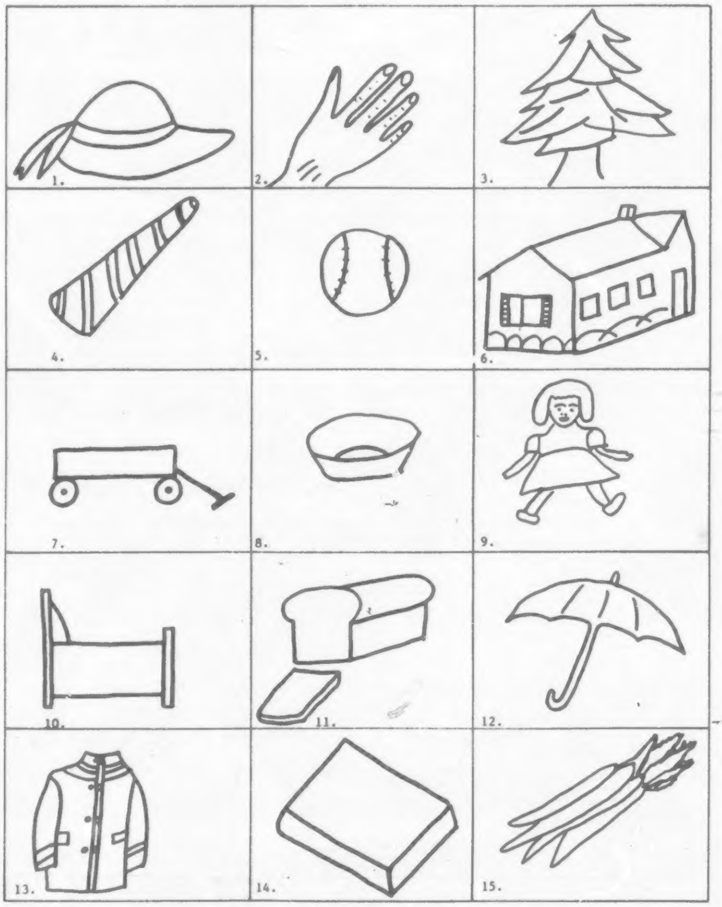
[3] Additional exercises can be found in Chapter Six, page 129.

Much of the auditory training needed can be developed during the early reading period as long as the child has demonstrated the ability to hear sounds and rhyme. It is not necessary to wait until a great many sounds have been learned or until the child can readily make consonant substitutions. Time for perfecting these skills can be built into the early reading experiences.

When children have learned a sound, for example, the sound of "H", they may be asked to draw a page of objects that begin with this sound. They might draw a hat, hand, house, horse. Alternatively, the predrawn worksheet (Example A) included here illustrates the difficulties which develop when children give unexpected names to objects. Is 2. a picture of a hand or of fingers? Is 4. a horn or a cone? Is 7. a wagon or a cart? What is 8.? Is 9. a doll or a girl? Is 11. a loaf of bread? Is 13. a jacket or coat or parka without a hood? Who knows for certain what 15. is? Having children name the objects they choose to draw or choose from a picture collection can avoid misinterpretation and resulting feelings of failure.

When using worksheets, agreement on the names of the objects must be reached before children are asked to mark the pictures of objects beginning with a given sound.



Other Factors of Readiness: Physical, Social, and Emotional

The child who is unhappy, insecure, or lacking social skills, is not likely to respond positively to early teaching. A child who feels unworthy or insignificant has little motivation for tackling a difficult task but as that child experiences some success, many insecurities disappear. The status earned among peers is critical to social growth. A child not emotionally and psychologically ready to begin reading may demonstrate defiant and withdrawn behavior and build up a resistance to reading. Physical maturity is equally a critical factor of readiness for reading instruction. The child will not only use eyes and ears in early reading, but also hands; the young reader needs to have a sense of direction and to have developed some fine muscle control.

Approaches to Initial Reading Teaching

The various reading series recommended for use in Manitoba schools make possible the use of a number of different approaches and a variety of additional support materials made available other than those on this list. Most teachers choose at least two different sequenced series and frequently select series which approach reading from two completely different beginning points.

The best approach is one where teachers use a combination of systems. They control the vocabulary in the early stages using some sight words and some phonics and from the very beginning encourage children to "think as they read" so that using content clues becomes a highly efficient word attack skill. Teachers use language experience charts and encourage the use of the many books available for beginning readers. Children read each other "stories" and are stimulated to use all forms of word attack. Intelligent guessing is encouraged and the teacher can translate the words which are difficult for children, e.g., Mr. and Mrs. Giesbrecht had three children, Tom, Peter, and Philippa. Children might need help with Giesbrecht if the surname were not a familiar one; the amount of help needed for Philippa might be only with the beginning sound of "f".

Language Experience

This approach uses the language of the child. Reading material consists initially of the stories the child dictates to the teacher. Skills are introduced as needed. The child moves directly from the experience chart to a variety of reading materials and no basal readers are involved. This is a highly individualized approach which depends on the expertise of the classroom teacher. Such a flexible structure requires that the teacher prepare many materials and keep very accurate records of each child's growth and special needs. Experienced reading teachers who have reasonably sized classes sometimes choose this approach in preference to any other. Certainly, it provides for maximum individualization. Inexperienced teachers may not be able to sequence adequately the reading skill-building activities or provide for the necessary practice. Teachers are challenged in creative preparation of materials and activities to keep the language experience program going. The rewards for children and teachers are multi-faceted.

The Language Experience Reading Program (Commercial)

Publishers now offer excellent programs to guide teachers who want to begin with the child's own language but who, at the same time, feel a need for some guidance in structuring skills. These series provide reading material for use following chart work and the ancillary material available is adequate. However, once basals are used, the program depends on controlled vocabulary unless the teacher emphasizes the use of context clues and provides a wide variety of reading materials and encourages the child to become an independent reader. In this program many skills are developed simultaneously, so that when the child does begin to read (perhaps a little later than with some other approaches), it is with surprising independence and comprehension. The guidebooks in these programs usually make provision for continuing language development. There are practical and interesting activities and suggestions for giving children rich experiences with language.

Sound Symbol

This approach begins with letter symbols and the sounds they represent. A systematic phonics program is followed. As phonetic analysis is mastered, the program is broadened to include additional word recognition techniques and comprehension skills. If provision is not made to enrich and enlarge vocabulary and to improve the quality of language, the teacher must provide these components. Word recognition is not enough, not even at the initial reading stages.

It takes time and resourcefulness to turn a sentence like A rat ran fast into an interesting and meaningful story. Apart from the pride in being able to translate the symbols, the script provides no motivation for children to read. Such a sentence has to be enriched by oral work before and after the lesson. In the very beginning stages, vocabulary is controlled by the phonics children have learned. However, children with good oral skills who are encouraged to use content clues and to think as they read quickly form the habit of using phonetics as "reduced" clues. They concentrate on the initial sound of a word and use one or two of the other letter sounds to confirm. The "intelligent guesses" are made by using content, e.g., "In the morning we eat "br", would confirm the inference.

Controlled Vocabulary

This approach begins with selected and controlled sight words and introduces phonics gradually. The sound-symbol relations are deduced from known sight words. The child is taught all the word recognition skills and is helped to use them simultaneously when meeting an unfamiliar word. The child is encouraged to combine context clues with just enough word analysis to verify or change judicious guesses. The structured approach to vocabulary building and the reinforcement given to underlying skills is useful to teachers who have not yet developed expertise in these areas.

Individualized Reading

Once children have enough skills to read independently they should be given time for individualized reading. Teachers can place one advanced group at a time into individualized programs for two week periods. This will indicate how much more individualized reading is advisable. Three beginning reading groups seem to be the maximum number that can be effectively handled in the Primary One classroom without either exhausting the teacher or causing children to be ignored because of lack of time.

Individualized reading requires an abundance of books, manipulative materials, learning centres, and games. Individualization requires space and materials to engage in the follow-up activities which must be part of this program. Reference books that give suggestions for individualization are included in the Bibliography at the end of this chapter.

The Primary One teacher must be able to organize a classroom that offers many of the facilities and activities of a good kindergarten. There must be centres and equipment for those children who are not in reading groups as well as centres for the reading children to work in; some British Infant Schools operate in this way. The classrooms resemble kindergartens and reading groups receive instruction and help and then return to work with other groups. There is no pressure placed on children to learn to read, but teachers do plan the kind of activities which motivate children to want to read, and many pre-reading materials are available. Often such rooms have multi-age groupings and so children who

190

make a late start in reading are not so likely to feel inadequate. Children move out of the Infant School when they have begun to read at about the pre-primer level and when it is felt that they can handle a more formal program.

Teachers who use multi-age groupings in Manitoba find that they, too, can form their reading groups according to developmental levels. Where teachers have six to eight-year old learners, the number of children who do not yet read is small in comparison with a Primary One classroom.

The following suggestions for interpreting stories can be used at the time children are learning to read and at any other time when teachers wish to integrate reading with other areas of the curriculum:

1. using modeling clay to depict a scene or characters from a book;
2. making posters using paint, crayons, chalk, paper sculpture, ink, cut-out pictures, real materials;
3. producing a "movie" of a book by creating a series of pictures on a long roll of paper or using pictures with a flip-book technique;
4. creating a series of original illustrations for a story using any medium desired;

A group project to illustrate a story.

5. using a flannel board, one child tells the story while another manipulates characters on it;
6. dressing dolls to depict character(s) from a book;
7. making dioramas, sand table scenes, murals;
8. telling a story to musical accompaniment;
9. marking passages of description for oral reading;
10. dramatizing a story: several children may read the same story and can work together;
11. describing orally or in writing an interesting character in a book to motivate other children to get acquainted with such a person;
12. constructing a miniature stage using pipe cleaner dolls as the players;
13. writing or telling the most humorous, exciting, interesting, sad or pleasant incident in a book;
14. writing a letter to a friend advising him or her to read a book;
15. using information in the book to make a scrapbook about the subject;
16. writing a simple book review for the school newspaper;
17. pairing off for a conversation about a book;
18. relating a significant incident or anecdote: each student plays the role of a speaker on a TV program about good books;

19. comparing two books on the same subject, on different subjects, or two books by the same author;
20. making lists of new, unusual, or interesting words or expressions encountered;
21. sharing books about how to make or do things by having the readers give oral or written directions or demonstrations;
22. writing one's own story from a book title; discuss the differences in the stories;
23. reporting on a travel book by giving an illustrated lecture using postcards, magazine pictures;
24. writing a series of questions which the student thinks other readers should be able to answer after reading the book;
25. giving a sales talk: the student presents himself or herself as a salesperson endeavoring to sell the book to the class;
26. holding a round-table discussion chaired by a student;
27. producing a puppet show;
28. acting out a pantomime and encouraging the audience to guess what the story is about;
29. sharing books of poetry by choral reading, writing a composite poem, dramatizing the poetry, collecting pictures to illustrate verses, accompanying poetry with various rhythmic activities, setting a verse to music, adding original stanzas to a poem (helps the children understand poetry construction and encourages them to write);
30. reporting on a historical book by making a large pictorial time line or map;
31. playing the role of a reporter at the scene: while it's happening, a crucial scene is described on the spot by a TV or radio reporter;
32. decorating a book jacket and writing a blurb to accompany it;
33. writing or telling different endings to the story;
34. writing a magazine ad for a book.

B. Mathematics

The K-6 Mathematics Guide, (Province of Manitoba, Department of Education), provides a detailed outline of the concepts and skills that most children in Primary One should be able to handle. Objectives for lessons designed to teach these skills and concepts are clearly stated. Activities and materials are suggested to help teachers develop strategies to promote understanding and to give practice in skills.

Activities making extensive use of a wide variety of concrete materials are basic to this program and ample time is given for the pre-number experiences so necessary before the child is asked to handle "formal" numbers. Teachers are asked to move slowly and thoroughly in the early stages where number concepts are being developed. Number readiness is as important as reading readiness, but too often this readiness is not established before the child is plunged into symbolic representation of mathematical ideas. Mathematics is more than the study of numbers; it includes logic, geometry, measurement, and estimation.

Grouping children in mathematics is just as necessary as it is in language arts. Some children in Primary One may need to spend many months manipulating materials before they are ready to put anything on paper. Teachers could use the activities suggested for pre-mathematics in kindergarten learning centres. (Refer to Chapter Five, pages 106-108). There are also readiness activities suggested in the kindergarten section of K-6 Mathematics; many of these are appropriate for children in Primary One.

Though workbooks are available for this stage, they are apt to interfere with the smooth flow of concept growth. Activities for which the child is not ready may be introduced simply because they are on the next page; activities designed by the teacher to fit exactly into the stage the child has reached are much more effective; time should be spent in manipulating objects rather than "filling in" pages in Primary One. When a concept appears to have been established or a skill learned, a worksheet can be used to advantage as a diagnostic tool or to provide some positive reinforcement for the child. Except where a sheet is carefully designed to be a teaching aid, worksheets should be "easy" in the sense that they include only those items which the child has already learned and can handle comfortably in oral and manipulative work. A workbook page "all correct" can help a child recognize that he or she can and is learning. The positive approach of counting and recording the number of correct responses, rather than the number of incorrect ones, strengthens a child's confidence.

Mathematical symbols have to be read and must be taught as reading. When the child is asked to read numerals, he or she must be able to put this statement into words and must know what it means. Sorting, classifying and generalizing, which are necessary processes in the development of thinking skills, are an integral part of a mathematics program and are written into the curriculum guide and the kindergarten section of this sourcebook. When children in Primary One measure, they should begin using the most common metric terms and should not be exposed to conversion from metric to Imperial units or vice versa. Terms like mile, yard, pound and gallon will have lost much of their usefulness by the time these children are in high school.

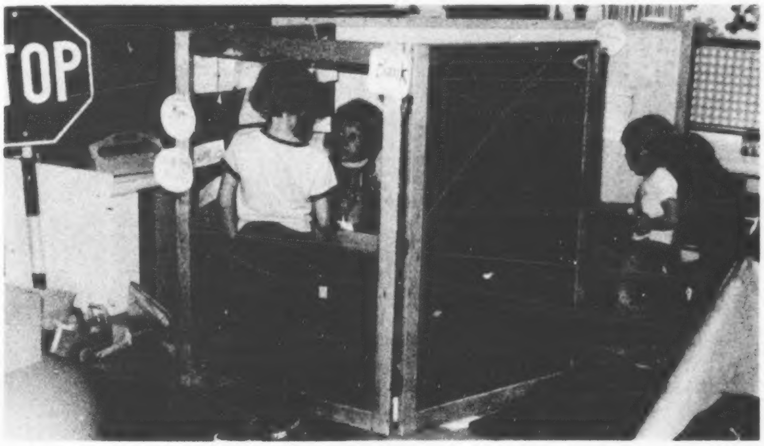
The vocabulary of mathematics is often too difficult for young children, and time should be given to making certain that they understand the vocabulary needed for estimation and comparison (See page 251 in Mathematics K-6). They should hear the terms used in set theory, but should be allowed to use terms such as "exactly the same as" or "as many as" in place of the more difficult terms. They should be able to recognize intuitively the various shapes introduced in Primary One, but not be expected to state a clear definition.

Note: See the list of teacher resource books for primary mathematics in the bibliography at the end of this chapter. Also see the bibliography provided in K-6 Mathematics.

C. Social Studies

New guides for social studies will likely be available in 1980, at least in interim form. Presently, teachers have a great deal of freedom in the selection of specific content in the Primary Social Studies programs. Six units are suggested in Primary One. Within this flexible framework, social studies can be taught in an integrated program which will help the child to meet the following objectives:

- to function as a member of a group;
- to develop skills in using the methods and tools of social scientists;
- to develop thinking ability.



At work in the community.

The content focus in Primary One is the immediate community. Children should not be "learning about" as much as experiencing what goes on in a community. A post office project, for example, can be a very vital part of a language arts program. In addition to having a room post office (probably near Valentine's Day), the children should post letters to themselves or their parents to be received at home. The local letter carrier could likely be persuaded to tell about his or her part of the job and, if possible, the children should see the local post office in action.

Postal workers visiting the class can be encouraged to discuss with the children some of the problems they encounter in their work, such as blocked pathways, unfriendly dogs, badly addressed letters. Where possible, pictures of more primitive arrangements for carrying messages should be presented. A role playing situation can be included. Children should consider the problems of message bearing in the Arctic or jungle. It is important to accept and appreciate the interdependence of people and to appreciate the contributions others make by their work.

Developing initial map skills can be incorporated with language arts activities. A story as simple as The Gingerbread Man can become a pictorial map. This map can then be repeated with symbols instead of pictures.

The Department of Education Social Studies Supplement for Grades 1, 2, and 3 may be useful to teachers with students of native ancestry. The Supplement suggests methods of adapting the regular social studies program to meet the needs and the interests of Indian and Metis children.

In addition to this resource, the Northern Experience Reader, developed for use in northern, multilingual classrooms, could be integrated with some social studies units. The series is available from the Manitoba Text Book Bureau in either Cree, Odjibwe, or English. Titles include: The Store, The School Bus, Games, The Boat Ride, The Plane, Special Events, and Legends.

D. Science

Science K-6, 1979, (Province of Manitoba, Department of Education), clearly outlines the main concepts to be dealt with in each year. These have been broken down into sub-concepts to facilitate program planning, and processes and skills are outlined and activities suggested. Reference materials are listed and suggestions are made for meeting science objectives through an integrated program.

The science program focuses on observing, comprehending, and on becoming aware of structure and function. Children should demonstrate an increasing ability to verify personal observations; to observe cause and effect; to notice trends which may lead to a generalization or law; to classify according to structure; to classify according to function; to formulate questions; to offer a hypothesis, e.g., "maybe gravity pulls everything downward"; to examine a hypothesis that may or may not hold true; to become excited about discovering new knowledge.

Within the framework and with the help provided in Science K-6, teachers have freedom to select and vary the content of science teaching. The questions children ask, the materials they bring to school, the things they read about, and current local concerns are likely to provide the best starting points for content selection.

A listing of resource books is available from Instructional Media Services, 1181 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 0T3.

E. Fine Arts and Physical Education

The following program guides are available on request from the Curriculum Development Branch, Department of Education: K-6 Music (1978); Primary Physical Education (1966) - under revision; and Art K-6 (1977). The arts are fundamental to a full learning experience. Teachers know that primary programs with a strong focus on art, music, drama, dance, and physical education meet the needs of primary children far better than those programs that concentrate on a narrower definition of "basics" and treat fine arts and physical education as frills. Educators and psychologists have discovered that fine art and physical education activities, which are activities that interrelate movement, sensory awareness, body awareness, and motor coordination, are of great value in the development of all children. The arts and physical education offer opportunities for creative experiences at school.

Teachers' references for program suggestions for fine arts and physical education are included in Chapters Five and Six.

'We've got rhythm, we've got music . . ."

III. Suggested Guidelines for Kindergarten-Grade One Transition

The readiness group is a transition class usually set up for children whose skills are not yet sufficiently developed to enable them to benefit from formal instruction. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the teachers of readiness groups must provide a program which is a bridge between kindergarten and Primary One and the room should contain many of the games and learning centre materials common to kindergarten.

Readiness groups are formed to provide concentrated readiness training and to prevent "failure experiences" in initial academic work. Once readiness skills are developed, the child should move comfortably into a full Primary One program paced to meet the individual learner's needs.

The areas in which "readiness stage" children are likely to need special attention are:

- developing body awareness, coordination and balance;
- determining handedness and a feeling for direction;
- using small muscles and coordinating eyes and hands;
- developing visual acuity;

- developing auditory acuity;
- sorting into categories;
- sequencing and patterning;
- improving oral language;
- acquiring pre-mathematics skills;
- developing social skills;
- having meaningful and happy experiences which give children a reason for wanting to read and write.

The teacher must be observant to determine when readiness stage children have outgrown a kindergarten environment and be more appropriately accommodated with Primary One children.

Developing Body Awareness, Coordination, and Balance

Extra time should be given to physical activities. As well as the usual games and activities, the "readiness stage" children should engage in additional singing games and rhythms and many other activities to develop gross motor control.

Examples of equipment and activities to develop gross motor skills:

Balance beam for forward walking; backward walking; walking with eyes fixed on a goal; walking with eyes closed; same motions with bean bag on head or in hands;
Ropes for jumping over, skipping and walking along in zigzag fashion;
Hula hoops for crawling through, skipping, twirling;
Bean bags for throwing and catching; for balancing, tossing at targets;
Mats for tumbling and landing on;
Motion activities such as running, jumping, hopping free or to music;
Group and circle games;
Creative movements such as responding to directions; interpreting ideas; responding to music - move like an elephant, dance like a snowflake;
Jungle-gyms, riding toys and large construction toys;
Take apart and put together toys;
Ride-M-Karts and Ride-M-Dolly;
Kiddie Bouncer or trampoline.

Determining Handedness and a Feeling for Direction

1. Ball bouncing, throwing and batting can provide an indication of handedness. Let the child pick up equipment and discover which hand is easier to use. Observe children painting, crayoning, cutting, threading, and kicking. If the child seems to have no preference and is equally good with both hands (ambidextrous) encourage the use of the right hand as most tools and toys are designed for right-handed people. Children who are definitely left-handed should be allowed to develop as left-handed people; the teacher must be constantly alert to give them the kind of help they will need in adjusting to directionality in reading and printing. A simple method that many teachers use in determining handedness is to ask the child to stretch the arms forward from the shoulder. As the child tires, he or she may drop one particular hand before the other. If this happens consistently the teacher can be fairly certain that the hand which remains up is the dominant hand.
2. Draw footstep paths on the floor. Have children follow these paths stating which foot they are placing down each time.
3. Practice moving eyes and hands across the page in a left to right direction.

4. Use singing games that require knowing left from right, e.g., in place of "Skip to my Lou", sing - "Bend to the right and bend to the left; Bend to the right and bend to the left; Bend to the right and bend to the left: Twirl around in a circle." Vary the verses with words - skip, clap, tap, point, smile, etc.

Examples: (a) I touch my cheek, my chin, my chair
I touch my heels, my head, my hair
I touch my knees, my neck, my nose
My left foot (raise) has five toes

(b) Do as I say

Tap your left foot - tap, tap, tap
Tap your right foot - tap, tap, tap
Raise your right hand - up, up, up
Raise your left hand - up, up, up

Your left hand up and your right hand out
Your right hand down and your left hand up
Put them together to form a cup

To the tune "London Bridge"

(c) Head and shoulders, knees and toes
Knees and toes, knees and toes
Head and shoulders, knees and toes
Put your left (right) hand on your nose

Using Small Muscles and Developing Eye/Hand Coordination

The following activities are useful:

- drawing with large crayons,
- working with pegboards,
- stringing beads, macaroni, etc.,
- using sewing cards,
- using puzzles and form boards,
- playing with manipulative games,
- tracing templates,
- threading and weaving,
- playing with sand,
- modelling clay,
- building with blocks,
- engaging in workbench activities,
- practising with lacing and zipper toys,
- cutting with blunt scissors,
- beginning manuscript writing.

Developing Visual Acuity

1. Sorting to find two that are the same - start with objects, then pictures and finally move to symbols, letters and words.
2. Given four or five objects, pictures, symbols, letters and words, find the one that is different - the differences can be in shape, size or direction. Particular attention should be paid to children having problems with reversed forms.

   Most reading readiness workbooks have pages designed to develop visual acuity. This is one area where worksheets are an effective learning aid. It is recommended that teachers of readiness groups avail themselves of all the readiness material that accompanies the recommended reading series.

   For children who have prolonged difficulty in seeing likenesses and differences, the Frostig Visual Perception Program is recommended. This program recognizes five areas of deficiency and provides graduated exercises to develop the weak skill. It is intended for use only with those children with severe problems; however, some of the exercises provided can be adapted for occasional use with all children.
3. Completing pictures with missing parts.
4. Copying visual designs.
5. Identifying shapes - use the four basic shapes: square, circle, triangle, rectangle
   - let children cut out many of these shapes in various sizes and colors, and use them for sorting and naming
   - find objects in the room that have these shapes
   - make pictures using shapes
   - count the number of shapes in given pictures
   - use verses for riddles on shape themes:

I am a circle
Round like a pie.
I am a triangle
Three sides have I.
I am square
My sides are four.
I am a rectangle
Shaped like a door.

Developing Auditory Acuity

In addition to the listening training that is part of the language arts program, readiness children need special help in discriminating between initial consonant sounds, and in recognizing rhyme. Useful activities include:

1. Say word groups such as Mary, meal, house and match. Ask the children to tell you which words start like Mary. Later, ask for the word that did not start like the others;
2. Use boxes of small objects and boxes of pictures and have the children sort to find all that start with a given sound;
3. Have fun supplying rhyme word to rhyming couplets such as:

In Johnny White's house
I caught a small ___________

In Terry Brown's hat
I caught a fat ____________

I think there's a skunk
In my grandmother's ____________;

4. Sing songs or say jingles that allow children to supply rhyme as in old favorites: "This Old Man", "One, Two, Buckle My Shoe";
5. Match picture cards and initial consonant cards;
6. Learn to sing the alphabet song.

IV. Stage D Suggestions

This stage is essentially one of stability and consolidation. The child is by now likely to have made the major adjustment of leaving the security of home and family and should have found security with peers and teachers at school. There has been time to make special friends and to adjust to large and small group activities.

The many learning tasks accomplished should have given the child a better self-concept. He or she has enjoyed music, rhythm and drama, has gained more motor control, and is learning to handle feelings and emotions. Working with paint, clay, and other media have stimulated creativity. In addition, the child in Stage D feels the independence and power that come with being able to read what others have written and to write down his or her own thoughts.

This is a stage in which teachers must balance the school program to assure opportunities for social, affective, and physical growth as well as for cognitive learning; it is a stage that is critical for growth in positive self-concept. Children who are not succeeding academically and who are allowed to develop inferiority feelings may begin to reject all learning activities. Teachers of this age group must be aware that, while most eight-year old children feel a growing strength and independence, there are children who become frustrated and insecure because they suspect that they are not succeeding in the areas which appear to be the most important, namely the academic. Teachers must be sensitive and observant! Children need to be certain that they have skills which are valued and recognized and still need help and guidance as they mature. These are children approaching the pre-adolescent stage with its challenges and major upheavals: their bodies will soon change so that their coordination may be temporarily upset; they will begin to question their own values and the value systems of their parents; they will demand quick and simple answers to questions that have exercised the minds of some of the world's greatest thinkers without producing universal answers. In adolescence, they will have increasing responsibility for their own actions and decisions in terms of their own emerging value system. Stage D children will span the middle years with much less trauma if their teachers take advantage of the stability, usually apparent in Stage D, to help them develop the emotional security that can sustain them in the pre-adolescent stage. The Stage D child still needs help in setting reasonable and attainable standards of self-behavior. Guidance is needed in learning to consider the rights of others and in understanding and dealing with emotions. This child must experience the confidence which comes from good body coordination. A child who has developed positive work habits and satisfaction in accomplishment, balanced with a repertoire of satisfying leisure-time activities, can usually channel his or her abundant energy and travel through adolescence with a minimum of anxiety to self and others.

Range of Ability in Stage D

As children move upward in the school system, there is a tendency to treat them as though individual learning differences are reduced with each passing year. This does not happen. In fact, the range of difference is likely to become wider with each year of growth. As children reach the middle years, there is no reason to assume that one text, one assignment, one evaluating pattern, one program will do for a complete class. No class of Stage D children should be handled as a homogenous group!

Stage D children increasingly need to have some choices in selecting and carrying out tasks; they also need guidance to help them recognize their own learning strengths and weaknesses and to choose work activities that build on their strengths. The teacher must be prepared to use a diagnostic approach in teaching and to provide a wide variety of materials in classroom learning centres; much of this material should be self-correcting. Volunteers can help with drill and remedial work designed to correct diagnosed weaknesses. With increased individual attention, there is greater potential for skill development. Though students can help each other, volunteers with some teacher guidance can make valuable contributions to a classroom program where a skilled teacher plans learning activities to meet needs of particular children, individually or as a small group.

Curriculum Guides

The curriculum guides, written by teacher-committees and available from the Manitoba Department of Education, are clear indicators of the scope and sequence of programs in particular subject areas. Learning goals are defined, suggestions for program strategies are made, and teaching and learning materials are included. The guides are supports for teachers in planning, and offer considerable freedom for variations in program design and delivery. Teachers have the professional responsibility for selecting the methods of accomplishing the aims and objectives set out in the curriculum guides.

It is suggested that teachers of Stage D children refer to the preamble and the outlines of the Stage C curriculum given in earlier sections of this chapter. Program suggestions for social studies, science, music, art, physical education, health and other content areas are applicable to this group as well. As much as is possible, these disciplines should be integrated with the broad language arts program and with each other.

Mathematics

The Mathematics K-6 curriculum guide gives a clear indication of the concepts to be developed in each grade. The Grade Two section is appropriate for children in Stage D, providing that the skills and concepts outlined for the previous grade have been mastered. The guide stresses the developmental process and suggests the sequence of experiences that are proposed at the Grade Two level.

The materials and methods suggested are based on the premise that Stage D children will learn through working with concrete and semi-concrete materials; there is an emphasis on the basic properties of the number system; the inverse relationship of addition to subtraction and of multiplication to division are introduced carefully as are the relationships between multiplication and addition and between division and subtraction; there is a firm commitment to drill on number facts up to 20 and to the consistent use of metric units in estimating and measuring.

Because workbook exercises replace the active time needed for discovery, oral language development and manipulative experience, their use is not recommended except as a diagnostic method or as a means of consolidating concepts and skills which the child has already understood. Workbook or worksheet experiences should be occasional, of short duration, involve few errors and be evaluated within minutes if they are to serve a useful purpose. The score should indicate the number of correct, rather than incorrect responses.

Time must be given to learning to read and write the symbols used for mathematical ideas and processes, but these symbols must be fully understood before they are used in written form. Problem solving related to games, art activities, classroom routines or community concerns can provide rich and relevant opportunities for developing math-related skills.

Language Arts

Usually Stage D children are reading fairly independently but still need regular assistance in strengthening word attack and comprehension skills. By now, readers should be relying heavily on context clues and using only such letter-sound clues as are really needed to unlock the unfamiliar word. Many children at this stage have, by a process of deduction, arrived at a knowledge of blends and both vowel and consonant digraphs and the vowel diphthongs. Such children should not spend time on phonic exercises; they should be improving their comprehension skills and using their time to read widely in trade books and parallel texts.

Some children not yet able to recognize the phonic elements and unable to make the necessary deductions will need regular instruction in phonics and practice in word attack. Some reading series introduce sight words in context and indicate the phonetic skills which can be an aid in unlocking each particular new word. A useful method for children who cannot yet mobilize the skills they have learned or use them where applicable, is to outline steps that could be taken in attacking a word, e.g.,
smothering --- mother
smother
smothering
Word recognition, by using a combination of all the word attack skills, should have become rapid and automatic at the end of Stage D. Once the child no longer needs to expend much energy in translation, he or she is free to concentrate fully on getting the meaning of what is read.

One must emphasize the need for children to read widely in appropriate materials in Stage D. Such reading gives children a firm base from which to advance to more difficult reading tasks and to develop a bank of experience. This is in line with the "stabilization" program which is advisable at this level. There is time to focus on writing and spelling, too. The language arts experience becomes both useful and pleasurable. This is a time for surrounding the child with fine literature and an abundance of easy-to-read materials while also providing ample time for creative writing. There is much that the teacher can learn about the child by sensitively observing what the child chooses to read, write, and how it is expressed.

Individualized Reading

Children who are completing Stage D can profit greatly from a period of individualized reading from books of their own choice. Some teachers provide an individualized program week during the second term. Others prefer to use two days a week for an individualized approach and continue with basal reader programs on the other days. Where enrollment is heavy, teachers will find themselves hard-pressed to arrange a scheduled teacher-child conference for each child once a week. Aides and volunteers can be of inestimable value in handling some other tasks, freeing the teacher for both informal and scheduled conferences related to specific books that individual children read.

If individuals and small groups are to go into a self-selection program like this, the school must provide a broad range of materials and the children should be allowed to profit from the reading experiences of others by visiting, talking, sharing, borrowing and suggesting.

The teacher must be prepared to diagnose problems, form instructional groups as required, and keep careful individual records. The role will change from that of teacher to guide, the behavior pattern being one of stimulation, followed by withdrawal until needed again. Teachers who are new to the experience of individualized reading often start by using kits of paperbacks. These kits have built-in materials for record-keeping and suggestions for follow-up work. This may make for a smoother first attempt but teachers usually move to designing their own programs as few kits available are suitable for primary children. Children should, on the whole, use their library books; the school librarian can offer suggestions for selecting books from the best in children's literature.

Follow-up activities for Stage D children should be relatively simple. The main purpose of individualization is to allow children to read material that appeals to them and to place them in a situation where they draw on their own resources thereby gaining confidence and independence. Follow-up activities that demand too much writing and organizing may defeat these purposes.

Children can share reading material, produce a play or skit, make a poster to draw attention to the book, formulate a set of questions to be answered by the next group to read the book, or, in a group, read a short story to the class. When one child convinces several others that they should read the book he or she has just finished and the children "book their turns", the teacher need no longer motivate the class.

Changing Series

Children in Stage D can readily move from one series of readers to another without experiencing a setback in their learning. At this stage, those children who started reading in a series which emphasized phonics should now be recognizing words by sound plus sight. Those who started primarily with sight plus sound should be making an increasing use of context clues. Before a change in reading materials is made, the teacher is advised to compare the skill lists of the two series to see if it is necessary to teach some particular skills. It is often advisable to give Stage D children a change. Most readers in a series follow the same pattern and approach developed in their early readers. Parallel readers can be used as recreational reading once the primary skills have been taught.

Written Language and Spelling

Stage D children will have been writing their thoughts down on paper for several months while they were in Stage C. Young children can become very excited about being able to write stories. This excitement must not be lost because of the mechanical problems of handwriting and spelling. Children will have to use many more words than they know how to spell. If spelling errors and untidy writing evoke criticism and rejection, then the flow of written work can easily be reduced to a mere trickle produced under duress. The teacher of Stage D children must be ready to accept what the children write and rejoice in their enthusiasm and their ability to be creative. But at the same time the teacher must recognize the importance of developing skills and must teach regular, well planned spelling skill-lessons completely separate from free writing.

Children in Stage D are only just beginning to learn to spell. Some children endowed with good visual perception and able to organize what they learn, can master spelling with very little effort. Once-a-week spelling lessons for these children may be enough. For other children, regular daily practice and instruction is required.

Some children who read well are, nevertheless, poor spellers. They have learned to look at a letter and know what sound it represents but have not learned to visualize the letter that symbolizes the sound they want to represent. To learn this skill, they must work with short words that are completely phonetic starting with three-letter, short vowel words. Difficulty in hearing the vowel in such grouping as big, bag, bug, bog, beg may point out the need for more work on listening and auditory discrimination.

When children are able to spell short, phonetic words, long vowels, digraphs, diphthongs, and syllables should be introduced, using words that follow the rules of phonics.

Irregular words such as you, who, and where, can be introduced when children are able to recognize the non-phonetic elements. Learning these words may require careful observation, oral spelling and rewriting to gain the advantage of a multi-sensory approach. Drills can help.

Usually, the Stage D child is able to learn to spell if given a chance to practice in regular sessions. Children who do not start to learn to spell until an older age often have great trouble in mastering this skill. The years between six and nine seem to be the years in which spelling skills can be mastered with greatest ease. Children who carry spelling weaknesses into the middle years seldom learn to be accurate spellers.

When children are learning to spell and write, the teacher should be willing to accept what the children write in their stories. The challenge is to help build up the children's pride in spelling correctly what they can. The teacher can help by providing lists of words likely to be required. Sometimes if the story is to be displayed or included in a booklet, the teacher may rewrite or type the child's story, spelling the words correctly. On occasion, children can rewrite their own short stories in writing class. Let the children accept that in a first draft, spelling errors are permissible but that their ultimate aim is to be able to spell all the words they need. This goal will not be reached in the elementary school. In the meantime, children are expected to spell as well as they can, while adults accept their versions of the words they cannot spell.

Teaching children to notice and remember spelling irregularities gives them a technique which reduces the heavy load of memorization; they become good spellers when they can concentrate on observing and remembering only the exceptions.

The following story was written by a six-year old girl as a response to a film-slide production. Her written expression reveals her confidence that her story will be accepted. The spelling errors are no cause for concern. A study of the errors made suggests that given regular spelling instruction, this child will eventually spell well. No red pencil should desecrate this work. The teacher will probably decide to work on gave and strange. In later lessons the child can be helped with live-lived, house, door, and perhaps even with apple and knock if she learns easily.

Snow White

Snow White livd in a whorm hows. An olova sodan Nock
Nock a Nock cam. Snow White hrd the strang Nock.
A man was DESCKISD as an old lady. Snow White went
to the Dor and the old which gav her a posin apal.
And SNOW White fell Down. And After That the
hansem Prints Chister on The Moth.

Nothing must dampen this child's creativity. No degree of mechanical expertise can make up for loss of the freedom and desire of this child to write her thoughts as they come to her.

Let them dance and laugh and sing
Youth is such a precious thing!

Bibliography

Language Arts

The related reading outlined in Chapters Four to Eight is recommended to teachers of Stage C and D children. In addition, the following books and materials on the teaching of language arts in Primary classes are suggested.

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This book includes speech improvement materials planned to enable children to listen carefully to their own speech and that of others (suitable for K, Gr. 1).

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These readers are accompanied by teacher manuals.

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K-3 books and accompanying records. Listening material is interwoven throughout the texts.

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Thorn, Elizabeth A. and Irwin, Joan M. Expressways (S.I.). Toronto: Gage Educational, 1977.

Thorn, Elizabeth A. Language Experience Reading Program. Toronto: W. J. Gage, 1975.

Wagner, Buy W. Listening Games: Building Listening Skills with Instructional Games. New York: Macmillan, 1960.

Record and teaching pamphlet. Let's Listen. New York: Classroom Materials, 1967.

My Weekly Reader. New York: Ginn, n.d.

SRA Reading Labs
These can be used to develop listening skills.

Sounds I Can Hear. Glenview: Scott, Foresman, 1966.
Records and picture cards (K, Gr. 1).

The following materials can be used for individualized reading:

1. The Scholastic Kits, "Reaching Out" (Grade 1), "Reaching Up" (Grade 2) and "Reading Higher" (Grade 3). Each kit contains 85 books and 10 skill games; the Grade One Kit includes records. The kits are available from Scholastic Book Services, 123 Newkirk Road, Richmond Hill, Ontario, L4C 3G5.

2. Scholar's Choice Chests, "Chest of Fun" (Grades 1 and 2), "Chest of Action" (Grades 2 and 3) and "Chest of Treasure" (Grades 3 and 4). Each chest contains 30 books and 30 activity cards with teacher's guide. The chests are available from Scholar's Choice, 50 Ballantyne Avenue, Stratford, Ontario, N5A 6T9.

Mathematics

Carmichael, Viola S. *Curriculum Ideas for Young Children.* Los Angeles: Southern California Association for the Education of Young Children, 1971.
Includes a bibliography of children's books and records dealing with concepts of shape, size and weight.

Copeland, Richard W. *How Children Learn Mathematics*. 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan, 1974.
This book discusses how children learn and deals largely with learning at the concrete-operational level.

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Lorton, Mary Baratta. *Workjobs: Activity-Centered Learning for Early Childhood Education.* Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1972.
This book includes activities for open classrooms.

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This report includes activities for teaching classification, seriation, and spatial relations.

Appendices and Glossary

Appendix 1: Sample Forms and Models for Orientation

Kindergarten Pre-registration

____________________ School Division Number ____________________ May, 19___

Note: To register for kindergarten a child must be at least five years of age on ____________________ of the year in which he or she is registered.

Name of child ______________________________ ______________________________
Surname Given names

Date of Birth ____________________ ____________________ ____________________
Day Month Year

Name of Parent or Guardian ____

Address ____

Telephone ____________________

School Bus Services

Is the school bus presently picking up other children at your bus stop? ________ yes ________ no

Please indicate exactly where you live so that bus routes can be planned in advance.

Note to Parents

(Could be sent home following the orientation session)

Dear ____________________

We all enjoyed having ____________________ in our kindergarten today and hope he/she was happy and is looking forward to attending full time.

Many kindergarten activities take place on the floor, so when your child comes to school in September, he or she should wear clothes that can stand up to frequent washing.

Please provide a smock or a man's cut-down shirt for such activities as painting.

Rubber-soled, or other non-slip shoes are needed indoors to reduce noise and the danger of slipping. These articles may be left at school. Please label your child's clothes for easy identification.

At times children ask to bring toys and gifts to school to show to the other children. Please do not send anything which is very precious in case it gets lost or broken. Articles which are brought should be suitably packaged to prevent damage en route.

Generally, children are placed in morning or afternoon classes according to age or bus timetables. If you have a special preference for one session or the other, please make this preference known early. An attempt will be made to meet your wishes.

Please get in touch if there are any questions in your mind about next year.

Yours sincerely,

Information Sheet for Children Registered in Kindergarten

__________ School Division, September 19__

This information is needed to assist teachers and principals in making adequate provisions for the registration, safety, and well-being of your child. If there is any further information which you think the school should have in order to deal with any special needs of your child, please include it or make an appointment to see your child's teacher.

Names

1. Child's name as on the birth certificate

   ____

2. Name to which the child responds (at this age)

   ____

3. Full name of father

   ______________________________ ____________________

   Full name of mother

   ______________________________ ____________________

Addresses

1. Home address and telephone number

   ______________________________ ____________________

2. Father's place of employment (if applicable)

   ______________________________ ____________________

   Address Telephone

3. Mother's place of employment (if applicable)

   ______________________________ ____________________

   Address Telephone

4. Name and telephone number of relative or neighbor -- to be used in an emergency if parents cannot be reached

Name	Address	Telephone

Medical history

1. Name of doctor (for emergency) and telephone number

Name	Telephone

2. Allergies ____________________

3. Previous illnesses ____________________

4. Any special medical problem that the school should know about

____

Previous school experience (if applicable)

1. Nursery or Day Care ____________________ Name of School

2. Previous Kindergarten ____________________

3. Names and ages of siblings attending this school

____________________ __________
____________________ __________
____________________ __________
____________________ __________

4. Names and ages of other siblings

____________________ __________
____________________ __________

5. Does your child require help in

tying shoe laces __________
putting on outdoor clothes __________
toileting __________
telephoning home __________

Transportion

1. Is your child able to walk home alone? ___________
2. Do you plan to pick your child up at school? ___________
3. Will your child travel to school by municipal transport? ___________
4. Will your child travel to school by school bus? ___________
5. In the event that the school bus is unable to make the return journey due to severe weather conditions, do you have a friend near the school who would agree to accommodate your child?
___________ Name and address of friend ____
Telephone ___________

Appendix 2: Sample Evaluation Form — An Edmonton Model

"SPICE"

This check list for assessment of the social, physical, intellectual, cultural, and emotional behaviors of kindergarten children has been adapted by permission of the Edmonton Public School Board.

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD

Name ______________________ Boy ________ Girl ________

School ______________________

Teacher ______________________

Date of evaluation ________ Year ________ Month ________ Day

Birth date of child ________ Year ________ Month ________ Day

Age of child at the time of evaluation ________ Years ________ Months

Social, Physical, Intellectual, Cultural, and Emotional Behaviors

Social

- Engages in constructive imaginative play.
- Prefers to work and play alone.
- Participates in small group activities.
- Participates in large group activities.
- Shares ideas, materials, and the teacher's time.
- Adjusts behavior to different settings.
- Gets along with others.
- Is developing manners.

Physical

- Is aware of body parts and their uses.
- Is growing in awareness of space and direction.
- Is developing large motor skills, e.g., walking, jumping, hopping, limb movements, throwing, balancing and small motor skills, e.g., activities using fingers (pegs, pencil, crayon).
- Has developed handedness.
- Is developing a sense of rhythm.

- Is becoming aware of the body's physical needs, e.g., the need for rest, bathing, grooming, eating properly, and proper selection of clothing to suit weather conditions.

Intellectual

General skills

These are achieved through the integration of math, science, language, physical education, art, drama, music, library, nutrition, kindercooking, carpentry, field trips.

- Is learning to acquire information through the following means:
    - observation;
    - classification (grouping variations, e.g., size, color, class);
    - ordering;
    - measurement (length, weight, volume);
    - investigation (experiments).
- Understands and uses numbers in everyday activities.
- Understands time sequence (e.g. yesterday, today and tomorrow).
- Transfers information from one situation to another, e.g., measuring sand to measuring flour for cooking.

Auditory discrimination

- Can locate the direction from which a sound is coming.
- Is developing the ability to distinguish differences in pitch and tone, identify rhyming words, and hear beginning and ending sounds.

Listening skills

- Follows directions:
    - simple (i.e. one direction at a time);
    - complex (i.e. 2 to 3 directions at once).
- Is developing an attention span.
- Is developing auditory and long term memory:
    - immediate recall or simple memory, i.e., tell or act out story parts;
    - long term recall, i.e., verbalize yesterday's experience, meals, story plots.

Comprehension skills

- Is beginning to understand and react to conversation.
- Is beginning to do the following:
    - put events in sequence, e.g., tells story in order;
    - draw conclusions, e.g., understands the final happening in the story;
    - identify the main idea, e.g., picks out the important idea in a story;
    - make inferences, e.g., makes judgements about happenings in a story.

Speaking skills

- Communicates effectively in gestures, in single words, in short sentences, and fluently with organized thoughts.
- Attempts to initiate conversation, to keep to the topic, to ask relevant questions.
- Pronounces words clearly.

Visual discrimination skills

- Usually progresses from left to right, e.g., printing name.
- Is beginning to see similarities and differences in pictures, shapes, letters, words, color, and size.

Pre-reading skills

- Is developing an interest in books.
- Is beginning to read pictures in books.
- Is beginning to draw pictures and name objects.
- Is beginning to draw pictures and tell related stories.
- Is beginning to recognize signs, calenders, clocks, thermometers, dials.
- Is able to print his or her name.
- Is beginning to print other words.

Cultural

- Is becoming more receptive to and involved in literature - stories, poems; music - records, signing, dancing, instruments; drama - puppets, acts, plays; and visual arts - self expression and that of others.
- Is developing an understanding and an appreciation of his or her own and other cultures.

Emotional

- Is attentive to and interested in the environment.
- Accepts classroom routines and requirements and follows directions.
- Is beginning to work independently, initiating and completing activities by himself or herself.
- Is beginning to take responsibility for his or her actions, e.g., evaluates activities and behavior.
- Is beginning to have trust and value both self and others, e.g., feels happy about what he or she does and what others do and shares ideas with others.
- Is beginning to express emotions appropriately, e.g., discusses feelings.
- Meets new experiences and settings with confidence, e.g., tries new materials.

Appendix 3: Reading Readiness Tests

Some kindergarten teachers may wish to assess the pre-reading skills of certain children in a more formal manner than those suggested in Chapter Six, Observation and Evaluation. The following tests are commonly used, but it is stressed that teachers must balance the results of any tests they administer with their own opinions of the child's abilities: reading instruction should not be denied any child because the score he or she achieves falls below the norm of a given test; alternatively, high scores are not to be interpreted as a directive for the teaching of reading in kindergarten.

1. The P.D.Q. Test (Prediction with diagnostic qualities)

Developed by R. L. Hillerich (1974), this test is designed to determine what skills children already have and those they still need in order to be successful in reading. Hillerich has selected items with diagnostic value which also have direct implications for follow-up activities and maintains that reading involves the ability to think in the language; mastery of syntax and a meaningful vocabulary are essential prerequisites. He also points out that children cannot deal with the printed word unless they have developed good visual and auditory acuity.

The test is designed for 4 to 5 year olds and must be administered individually. It requires 15 minutes to do and includes such items as: listening comprehension, auditory discrimination, vocabulary, ability to categorize and generalize, relationship words, picture sequence, oral language development, following oral directions, using oral context, knowledge of body parts, and letter form discrimination. This test and the program that accompanies it are available as Ready Steps (1977), Houghton Mifflin. It is in the process of being revised (as of the time of publication of this sourcebook).

2. School Readiness Test. W. E. Pratt & G. Stauffer. Bobbs-Merrill.

Sub-tests: a. Picture Vocabulary
b. Form Discrimination
c. Letter From Recognition
d. Letter Combination Recognition
e. Word Recognition
f. Word Matching
g. Following Directions
h. Memory for Design

3. Lee-Clark Reading Test. J. Murray Lee and Willis W. Clark. California Test Bureau/McGraw-Hill.

a. Matching Letter Symbols
b. Vocabulary
c. Following Directions
d. Identification of Letters
e. Identification of Words

4. Metropolitan Readiness Tests. Gertrude H. Hildreth, Nellie L. Griffits, and Mary E. McGauvran. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

   a. Word Matching
   b. Listening
   c. Matching
   d. Alphabet
   e. Numbers
   f. Copying
   g. Draw-a-Person

   1976 test has Part I for Kindergarten Entrance
   Part II for End of Kindergarten

5. Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis. Helen A. Murphy and Donald D. Durrell. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

   a. Letter Names
   b. Learning Rate
   c. Phonemes

6. Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness Profiles. M. Lucile Harrison and James B. Stroud. Houghton Mifflin.

   a. Using Symbols
   b. Making Visual Discrimination
   c. Context and Auditory Clues
   d. Names of Letters

7. Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests: Readiness Skills. Arthur I. Gates and Walter H. MacGinitie. Teachers College Press.

   a. Listening Comprehension
   b. Auditory Discrimination
   c. Visual Discrimination
   d. Following Directions
   e. Letter Recognition
   f. Visual-Motor Coordination
   g. Auditory Blending
   h. Word Recognition

8. Gates Reading Test (Individual). Arthur I. Gates. Teachers College, Columbia University.

   a. Picture Directions
   b. Word Matching
   c. Word-Card Matching
   d. Rhyming
   e. Reading Letters and Numbers

9. The Classification Test for Beginners in Reading. Clarence R. Stone and Clifford C. Grover. Webster Publishing.

   Concentrates on testing the ability to see likenesses and differences.

10. The Dominion Test of Reading Readiness is in the process of being revised (as of the time of publication of this sourcebook). This test has been used extensively as a useful first screening instrument for Canadian kindergarten children.

11. Clymer-Barrett Prereading Battery. Theodore Clymer and Thomas C. Barrett, Personnel Press.

    a. Visual Discrimination
    b. Auditory Discrimination
    c. Visual-Motor Skills

12. Springle School Readiness Screening Test

    Frequently provided or administered by the local Health Units.

13. Slingerland Prereading Screening Procedures. Educational Publishing Service.

    This test includes such items as: visual discrimination of letters and word forms, perceptual memory with motor response, visual motor skill, auditory discrimination, letter knowledge, and the ability to reproduce a story.

14. The Department of Educational Research, Ontario College of Education, 371 Bloor Street, W., Toronto, Ontario publishes a catalogue listing reading readiness tests.

15. The verbal sub-tests of the following mental-maturity tests can also be used to test reading readiness:

    a. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. American Guidance Service, Circle Pines, Minnesota.
    b. The California Test of Mental Maturity, Pre-Primary Battery. California Test Bureau/McGraw Hill, New York. Use the full test but consider carefully the scores on verbal concepts.
    c. Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test. Scholastic Testing Service.
    d. Detroit Beginning First Grade Intelligence Test. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.
    e. Otis Quick-Scoring Mental Ability Test - Alpha Short Form. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Appendix 4: The Art of Storytelling

Storytelling is the oldest of the arts - and the story is . . . what? . . . a moment of suspense, of excitement, an instant of merriment and laughter, a tear of pity and compassion, a sigh of satisfaction when the struggle is resolved, and the dream come true. The story is, in short, a newly created world built upon the words of the storyteller by the imagination of a listening child.

Values of Storytelling

A practical consideration - the development of a sense of aural comprehension - the ability to hear, understand, and react to the spoken word. This is of considerable concern, at this time, when more and more stress is being placed upon the visual aspects of audio-visual experience. Indeed some educators feel that "listening" has now almost to be taught.

Children respond readily to the listening experience involved in storytelling. It is not difficult to be aurally attentive to an exciting, humorous, or touching story relevant to the listener's world and well presented.

Through listening to varied types of stories the child increases vocabulary, not only using words correctly and understanding others' use of them, but gaining a sense of the nuances of words and their allusive qualities. The child also discovers that "it is not what he says, but how he says it."

One of storytelling's greatest values is the building of a happy relationship between teacher and children. There is no book to intrude, the teacher speaks directly to the group, with eyes moving from one child to another, and includes the children in the situation with a gesture, a nod, a smile, a frown.

Adaptation to the Needs of the Listeners

The storyteller can readily observe distracting factors such as inattentiveness, failure to understand the vocabulary used, uneasiness with the story content, failure of the children to relate to the theme of the story. By looking directly at the inattentive child, and by using his or her name, the storyteller can usually bring the child back into the story. "And Henry, what do you think that little dog did? It ran as fast as it could toward the mitten hanging from the tree!" The storyteller makes changes of pace, alters voice pitch, moves to a brighter mood, becomes very quiet, or very matter of fact in voice and manner.

In the use of new, strange, or difficult vocabulary the narrator can explain by an interjected phrase, a gesture, or action. "The old man rubbed his pate as he considered the problem." The teacher may say "the old man rubbed his pate, that is, he rubbed the top of his head," or "the old man rubbed his pate" and proceed to rub the top of his or her own head, or may use the words "the old man rubbed his pate" - offer the explanation and rub the head at the same time. The word has been made clear but the story has not been interrupted.

If the story involves a feature which may require explanation for understanding of the tale the teacher will provide for this. "A Walk with a Camel" does demand that little children know what a camel is like. A picture of the animal held up at the beginning of the story will give the information.

The Goals of Storytelling

Probably the greatest value in storytelling for the young child is the involvement in the offerings of good literature. Good children's literature and good adult literature share the same objectives - that is to share the feelings and experiences of others - through this means to better understand oneself and to extend one's knowledge beyond personal experience. Kornei Chukovsky, specialist in children's language and literature, states the goal of storytelling to be "the fostering in the child, at whatever cost, of compassion and humaneness, the ability of man to be disturbed by another's misfortune, to feel joy at another being's happiness, to experience another's fate as one's own."[1] The N-K and primary child finds much of this in the animal story, for writers have discovered this provides a straightforward and uncomplicated manner of presenting important problems of behaviour and relationships. The children see themselves objectively but they do see "themselves in fur" and are, as it were, "looking on" at their own experience.

Selection of Stories

The following are criteria for the selection of stories:

- Stories must be suitable for the age of the listeners and should reflect an interest, attractive and meaningful to them. This may, at times, reflect an activity in which the group is engaged, but this should not become the dominant aspect in selection. The story should exist in its own right for the pleasure of the listener. It is more than a teaching aid;

- Length is important. The attention span of most children is short and their physical needs are toward movement. They cannot be still for long without discomfort;

- Continued stories are not desirable for the N-K child. It is difficult to revive the previous day's impact or to carry over a mood. Some recapitulation is necessary but the previous day's impact is usually lacking. Stories requiring "continued" treatment are, ordinarily, best left for older children;

- Some stories cannot be told without adaptation. This is especially true of dialect material. The Uncle Remus stories present great difficulty and if they are to be told should be presented in a conversational tone and in everyday simple English;

- In adapting stories, the narrator must first analyze the story to select essentials. In either deleting or expanding the story the changes must never distort the original emphasis, intent, or mood;

- Stories which contain plenty of conversation and action with a minimum of description are desirable;

- Certain easily identifiable types of stories appeal to young children:

  - Animal stories - probably the favourites - the "child in fur." The listener readily identifies with the animal, seeing his own attitudes and behaviour - especially exciting when these involve some naughtiness or the forbidden adventure, e.g., The Tale of Peter Rabbit;

  - Stories in which machines and toys are personified;

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[1] From Two to Five, translated by Miriam Morton. Kornei Chukovsky. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1963.

- Stories that present everyday realistic situations - a child picture of life as the child knows it;

- Stories that touch realistic situations by the fanciful;

- Stories with rhyme, repetition, exaggeration;

- "Funny" stories;

- The traditional folk and nursery tales.

- The old folk and nursery tales are by far the most significant for the child. They present, in story form, the basic ideals of our society - that justice must be done, that good shall triumph and evil be destroyed. This is always the folktale outcome - a struggle where the good is rewarded, the bad punished - and the conclusion is always a satisfying and inevitable outcome.

  From a literary standpoint the value of these tales lies in their structure - the basic form of our fictional literature. Stories "good for the telling" will conform to this pattern.

  They will provide an introduction which makes a brief statement of time, place, characters.

The development of the story will follow the pattern of:

- a presentation of the situation to be resolved, the problem to be solved;
- a description of events, the happenings leading to the solution of the problem;
- a presentation of the climax, the point at which the problem is settled;
- the presentation of the conclusion which follows the climax swiftly. It is a brief and definite statement of the favourable outcome.

Techniques of Storytelling

The voice: A pleasant voice is the first requisite and clear articulation the second. Both can be developed by consistent practice. Most women would do well to lower their voices. Play "middle C" on the piano. Drop the voice approximately two tones below "middle C". Use this as the basic speaking tone for storytelling. As excitement grows the pace of speaking tends to increase in speed and the voice rises, usually becoming shrill. The lower pitched voice does not reach the same level. Listening to the flow of a high pitched voice tends to make children tense and uneasy. The lower pitched voice will tend to induce a calmer quieter atmosphere.

Breath control: Strive to develop deep and controlled breathing. Breath must come from the diaphragm not from the upper chest. a) Examine the story for long lines. b) Select the spots where the breath should hold through the long sentences - without a break. Read these aloud and check for the spots where breath runs out. c) Breathe deeper and try again until the lines can be sustained comfortably. d) Select a note below "middle C" and sing "la" on that note for as long as possible. e) Find long passages in a Shakespearean play and read aloud for breath control. f) When you have done some work on your story ask someone to listen to you. Check for pitch, for breath control and for judicious use of the pause - a brief break at suitable places between the long unbroken lines.

Articulation: a) Many speakers tend to hurry through their materials, to neglect to enunciate words clearly so that endings (final consonants) may be heard clearly. Canadians tend to speak without closing the mouth on vowel endings and without using the lips if they can avoid doing so - the word "due" becomes "doo", the word "mature" becomes "matoor", "want to" becomes "wanta", "you" becomes "yuh". A "slow speaking" approach will help as this gives time to form each word as it is spoken and the endings become clear avoiding the running of words into each other. Watch your audience - if the children are straining forward, tense and uneasy, they are not hearing well. Take a deep breath and project your voice to the farthest listener. If the group is small speak to the ends of the rows and the centre back.

b) Practice the story.

1. Find the pitch at which you can speak in your classroom to be heard, with least voice strain. Listen to yourself as you practice. A tape recorder will provide a clue to what is necessary for correction. Have someone listen and discuss your presentation. Practice in front of a mirror so that you know what the audience will see.
2. Make use of the pause. This can heighten suspense, peak a moment of excitement, release tension, draw out a laugh. It can also lead to concentration on the speaker's next words and can supply the introduction to the last line of a good story, leaving a feeling of satisfaction.

Learning the Story

How does the teacher learn a story? Many expect to memorize it and dread the idea of so doing, fearing it will lead to disaster. Experienced storytellers recommend a variety of procedures:

. do not learn, or tell, a story which you do not like;
. live with the story for a period of time reading and re-reading it and absorbing the mood;
. get a sense or feeling of the setting;
. consider the personality of each character;
. outline the action of the story, noting the logic of the sequence;
. try to recall the story as a series of scenes or incidents;
. do not try to memorize the entire story but do memorize:
  . Opening and closing sentences.
  . Rhymes: "Cats here, cats there,
  Cats and kittens everywhere.
  Hundreds of cats,
  Thousands of cats,
  Millions and billions and trillions of cats."[2]
  . Colorful or interesting phrases or words which are descriptive - "the pussycat went paddity-pat, paddity-pat, paddity-pat."
  . Effective conversation - As the donkey and the dog travelled along they approached a gate. On the gatepost sat a cat. "Miaeou-ou-ou" wailed the cat - "Miaeou-ou-ou." "What's the matter with you, old whiskers?" asked the donkey. "I'm to be drowned, I'm to be drowned," wailed the cat "miaeou-ou-ou."

Telling the Story

. Try the story out loud, repeating it many times before telling it.

. Strive for your own presentation - no narrator's version is definitive. Each tells a story in a personal fashion - voice, interpretation, personality, are all individualistic, and may differ with different audiences. Do not imitate.

. "Tell" the story. Try to transmit this to the listener.

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2. Millions of Cats. Wanda Gag. Coward McCann.

- Make use of facial expressions and bodily gestures to add realism and understanding.

- Pitch the voice loudly enough for all to hear but not so loudly that the children will tend to "fend it off."

- Adapt voice to the mood of the story. "After a time he began to wander about, going lippety lippety, not very fast and looking all around."[3] "Lippety, lippety" - slow moving words with pauses built right into the word "lip-pet-y."

  "Mr. McGregor jumped up and ran after Peter, waving a rake and calling out, "Stop thief! Stop thief!"[4] Here the pace is hurried, short words calling up movement and scurry.

- In maintaining a reflection of the pace of the story the pause is an effective tool. It may enlist the attention of the inattentive but it can also indicate change of time and place of action, and can heighten suspense. "He rushed into the toolshed and jumped into a watering can. (PAUSE) It would have been a wonderful place to hide in (slight pause) if it had not had so much water in it."[5]

- Beware of rhetorical questions. Children reply spontaneously answering according to individual experience. This can destroy a story. Father is bringing home a pet for Paddy. The pet is in Father's pocket. The climax is reached when "Paddy put his hands into one of the big overcoat pockets and what do you think he pulled out?" Child - "a gun!"

- It is suggested by most storytellers that the beginner starts by learning one story each month. This would give the N-K teacher ten stories the first year. By maintaining this policy for five years he or she would have a repetoire of fifty tales - and the ability to offer, at any suitable time, a story to fit the occasion. A wealth of stories to tell is a treasure of pure gold.

- The storytelling teacher also finds a place for poetry. Simple poems concerned with the child's world enhance his perception of the everyday happenings and frequently offer a new and unexpected view of the ordinary doings of his day. The poem becomes part of experience. On other occasions the poem leads him into a new perception of that which he has not hitherto seen or understood - something that prose cannot offer him - the poem surprises and delights, it sings like music and stirs the listener to feel intensely. The experience of poetry should come as pure pleasure finally to make itself a permanent part of the child's emotional and intellectual equipment. Some beautiful poetry should be part of the teacher's store - to be brought out to enrich the children's experience. When the children run into school, full of the excitement of the first snowfall the teacher catches their excitement and wonder and in a low voice, softly, slowly, holding the mystery in words and offers:

  "Let us walk in the white snow
  In a soundless space
  With footsteps quiet and slow
  At a tranquil pace
  Under veils of white lace."[7]

  or any other poem that fits the children's mood of anticipation and their feeling of "something wonderful."

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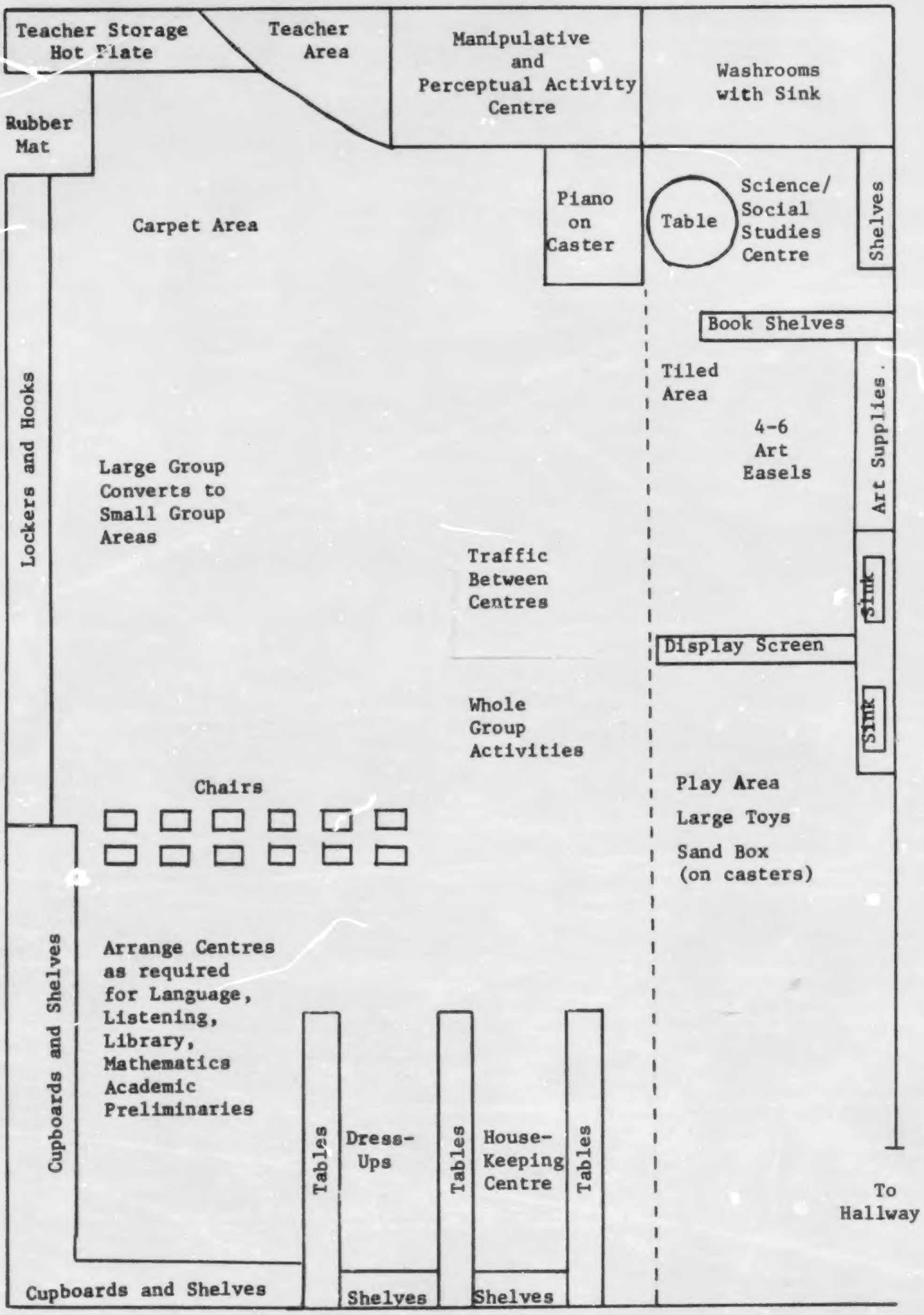
3. The Tale of Peter Rabbit. Beatrix Potter. Frederick Warne and Co., 1903.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Paddy's Three Pets - Arbuthnot Anthology Book III. Chicago: Scott Foresman, 1953.
7. Collected Poems. Elenor Wylie. Knopf.

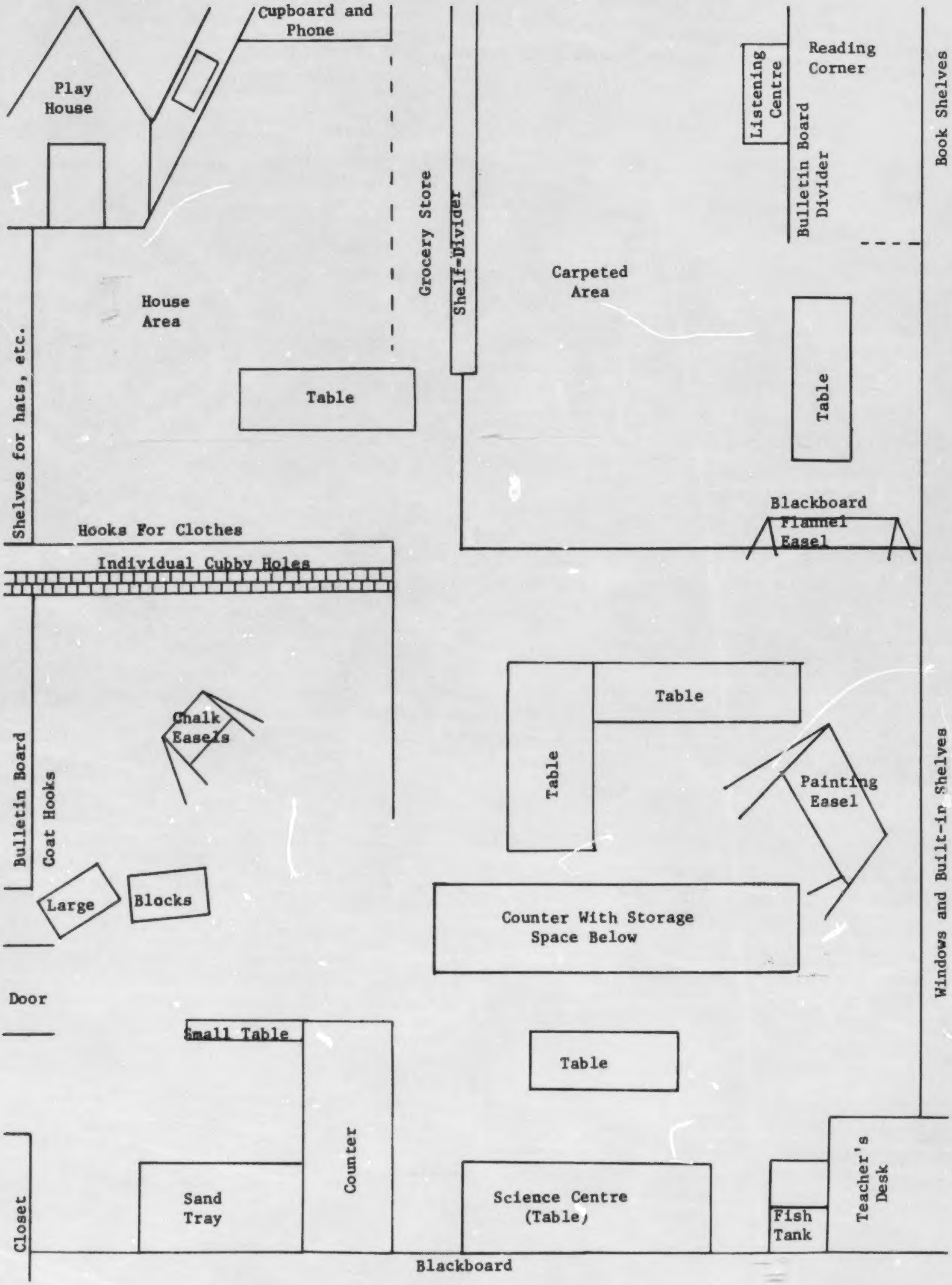
Appendix 5: Classroom Arrangements



Teacher Storage Hot Plate
Teacher Area
Manipulative and Perceptual Activity Centre
Washrooms with Sink
Rubber Mat
Carpet Area
Piano on Caster
Table
Science/ Social Studies Centre
Shelves
Book Shelves
Tiled Area
4-6 Art Easels
Art Supplies
Lockers and Hooks
Large Group Converts to Small Group Areas
Traffic Between Centres
Sink
Display Screen
Sink
Whole Group Activities
Chairs
Play Area
Large Toys
Sand Box (on casters)
Cupboards and Shelves
Arrange Centres as required for Language, Listening, Library, Mathematics Academic Preliminaries
Tables
Dress-Ups
Tables
House-Keeping Centre
Tables
To Hallway
Cupboards and Shelves
Shelves
Shelves

Room:

(20-25 children)


Play House
Cupboard and Phone
Grocery Store
Shelf-Divider
Listening Centre
Reading Corner
Bulletin Board Divider
Book Shelves
Shelves for hats, etc.
House Area
Carpeted Area
Table
Table
Blackboard Flannel Easel
Hooks For Clothes
Individual Cubby Holes
Table
Table
Chalk Easels
Painting Easel
Bulletin Board
Coat Hooks
Windows and Built-in Shelves
Large
Blocks
Counter With Storage Space Below
Door
Small Table
Table
Counter
Sand Tray
Science Centre (Table)
Fish Tank
Teacher's Desk
Closet
Blackboard

Glossary

- academic preliminaries - those conditions or previous learning experiences which are necessary for further academic learning to take place.

- accommodation, assimilation - terms used by Piaget to explain how new knowledge is incorporated with concepts already formed. The new knowledge may fit into previously held concepts and so can be assimilated. The concept may have to be changed in order to accommodate this new knowledge.

- aural learning - learning accomplished through hearing.

- cognitive learning - knowledge or perceptions which come through use of the thinking process.

- concept - an idea which results from abstracting and generalizing.

- concept formation - the process which takes place when one recognizes similarities in things otherwise different and differences in things otherwise similar.

- developmental approach - an approach in teaching which takes into account the stage of development already attained by the student.

- eclectic - selected from various systems.

- extrinsic motivation - that which comes from outside the person motivated.

- intrinsic motivation - that which comes from self-motivation.

- integrated curriculum - a program not rigidly divided into various subject areas but which consists of activities which make it possible for learning to take place in many subject areas simultaneously (e.g., water play may stimulate development of social skills, eye-hand coordination, sensory perception, of counting, weighing, problem-solving and language).

- interpersonal - taking place between persons.

- intrapersonal - taking place within a person.

- kinesthetic-proprioceptive - that sense which lets an organism know the position of body parts even when they cannot be seen and which communicates the position and movement of the body in space.

- musculo-skeletal - to do with the activities of muscles and those parts of the skeleton to which they are attached.

- preconceptual - the condition that exists before a concept forms (e.g., a small child may not have a clear concept of cow or horse until he or she observes some differences between the two large four-footed animals).

- preoperational - the second stage (ages 2-4) in Piaget's theory of the development of thinking. This stage precedes intuitive thought. In the preoperational stage, the child learns largely through activity.

- sensori-motor - concerning the interaction between a sensation and a movement, e.g., looking at the shape of a letter and reproducing it.

- structured teaching - teaching which proceeds in organized, related steps.

- unstructured teaching - less formal than structured teaching. Response from the students and the nature of their current needs will strongly determine the teaching.